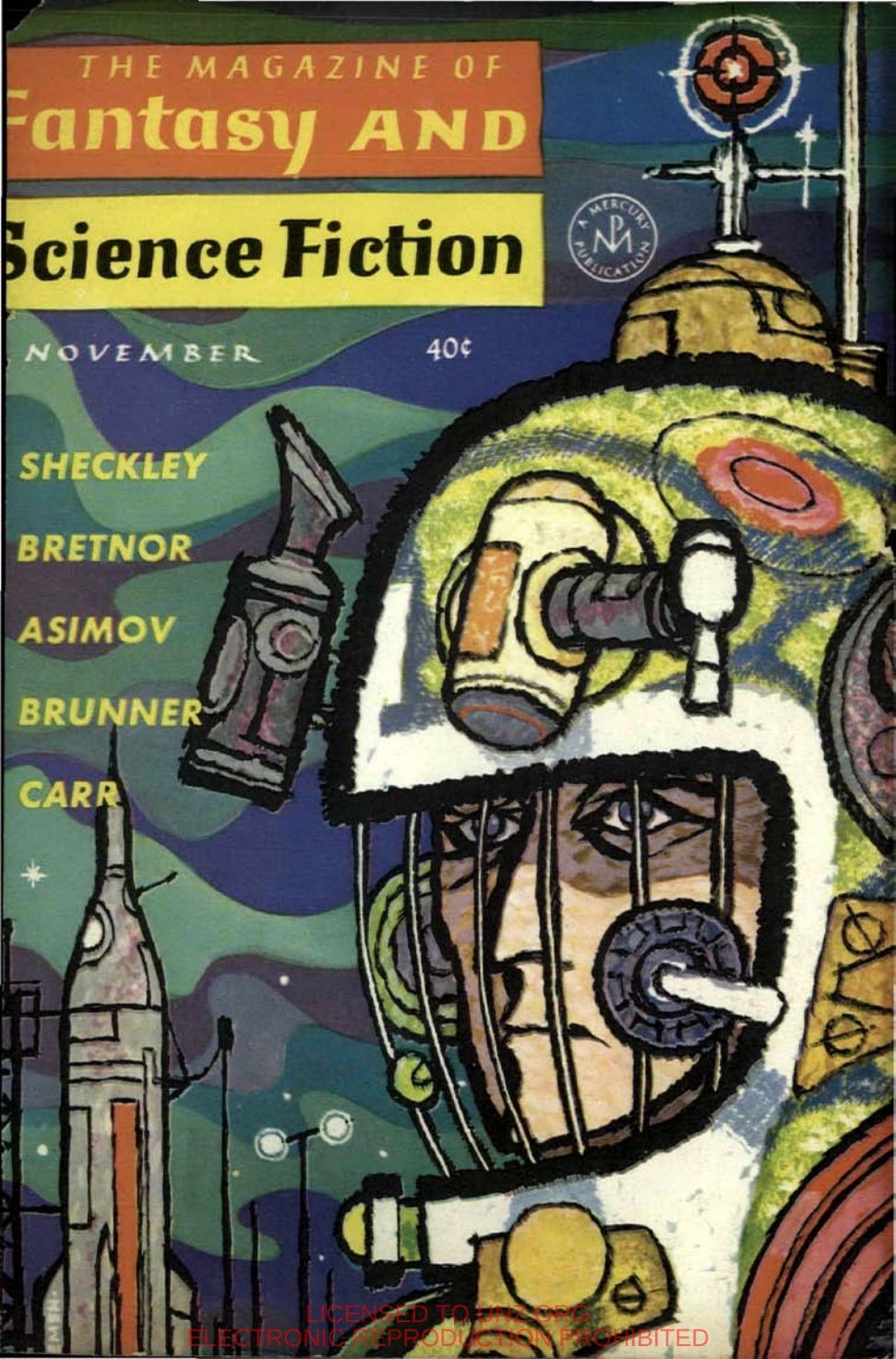

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Fantasy and Science Fiction

NOVEMBER *Including Venture Science Fiction*

The Secret Flight of Friendship Eleven	ALFRED CONNABLE	5
Sorworth Place	RUSSELL KIRK	13
Card Sharp (*verse*)	WALTER H. KERR	30
Hop-Friend	TERRY CARR	31
Science: Pre-Fixing It Up	ISAAC ASIMOV	43
Books	AVRAM DAVIDSON	53
Landscape With Sphinxes	KAREN ANDERSON	58
Protect Me From My Friends	JOHN BRUNNER	61
You Have To Know The Tune	R. BRETNOR	66
The Journey of Joenes *(2nd of 2 parts)*	ROBERT SHECKLEY	71
Ferdinand Feghoot: LVI	GRENDEL BRIARTON	127
Editorial		128
In this issue . . . Coming soon		4
F&SF Marketplace		129
Cover by Ed Emsh		

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In this issue . . .

. . . eager and impatient readers will find the second (and final) part of the **ROBERT SHECKLEY** novel, *The Journey of Joenes,* and will wish there were more. **JOHN BRUNNER'S** potent account of a telepath reinforces the counter-proverb that In The Country Of The Blind The One-eyed Man Is *(not)* King. **TERRY CARR** gives us a vivid, poignant account of the terrestrial "development" of Mars, and reinforces our vote for him as SF Discovery of The Year. Another comer is **ALFRED CONNABLE,** whose first story for us is a witty and satirical comment on the Race For Space; political philosopher **RUSSELL KIRK** chills our blood with an account in the grand tradition of ghosties and bogies and things that go *bump* in the nicht; **KAREN ANDERSON** shows herself at home in prose as in poetry with a vignette as savory as it is small; and **R. BRETNOR** pipes a song of fiendish glee to bring down the painted curtain for yet another month.

Coming Soon . . .

. . . is a new and droll translation from the French by **DAMON KNIGHT,** one of three **FRITZ LEIBER** pieces (a delightful embarassment of riches), an absolutely unprecedented and absolutely delicious novelet from romantic Brazil by one **FELIX MARTI-IBANEZ,** a most unusual story in most unusual form by **RICHARD MATHESON,** a song of sixpence sung by **VANCE AANDAHL,** a sober relation of a sobering problem in space travel by **DEAN McLAUGHLIN,** and other rare and goodly gifts by both fresh/new and tempered talent. *Buy, buy, buy!* There has never been such a bargain since lavender was sold "six sprigs for a penny . . ."

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Thirty year-old Alfred Connable is a poli sci graduate of the University of Michigan and an MA (Yale) in playwriting. This somewhat unusual combination of studies has produced two plays, "Silver Eagle" and "Shadows in the Court", a tour at the UN with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and such UP news beats as the Jackson prison riots and the Pauline Campbell hammer slaying. Such a combination was not always unusual. For two thousand years the only way to become a member of the Imperial Chinese Civil Service was by inditing essays and poems based on classical literary themes; an agreeable style in writing on the Greek and Roman authors of the Golden and the Silver Age was for centuries one of the best means to political advancement in England; and in the widespread world of the Thousand and One Nights, what better way to wazirate than a deft hand or tongue at couplets? . . . That these days may be returning—indeed, may already have returned, is the message of Mr. Connable's story herewith presented. Having fired off this missile in salute to poetry and the age of space, Mr. C., by his rocket's red glare, is currently engaged upon a book about Tammany Hall, and on several closet plays.

THE SECRET FLIGHT OF FRIENDSHIP ELEVEN

by Alfred Connable

IN ITS MAJOR DETAILS, PROJect Friendship Eleven was perhaps the best-kept secret since Hiroshima. It was initiated on August 14, 1961, following a massive screening of potential astronauts. Because of the flight's special purposes (unknown even

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to us before blast-off time), qualifying interviews and examinations used rigid criteria which were largely foreign to the previous experience of the examiners.

Seven astronauts were chosen, but by the end of the first month's tests it became apparent that one of them was unsuitable. This was our first confused clue that something extraordinary was afoot. Robin Hood (his true name) had been a picturesque aviator of some renown in the early 1940's. Barely two weeks before Pearl Harbor, he had won the Distinguished Flying Cross for destroying nine suspicious aircraft, including occupants, which had approached him one evening in a beautiful moonlit sky over the Fiji Islands.

It was a particular misfortune that Major Hood should fail so early in the training period. Project spokesmen had considered him a prime contender for orbit. Curiously, they repeatedly praised him as the leading, and most consistently articulate, contributor to the poetry section of *The Air Force Times*. Incidentally (which was not known to us at the time), his demise left the Project without a single experienced test pilot.

Major Hood's crisis arose with the Thematic Apperception Phase (TAP), which cruelly pierced that Achilles heel ostensibly caloused by twenty-two years of exemplary service. On the initial test—a fifteen-second response to a cleverly drawn juxtaposition of a pencil sharpener and a very bright sun—he wrote: "This looks to me like Man in the cosmos of his SOUL, beckoning forces higher than him, still, at the same time withal, A-OK."

Our understanding was that the "A-OK" ruined him. It was, in fact, the one phrase which the examiners had been ordered to rule as an automatic flunk. Hood himself was heard to mutter as he left the TAP cell: "I couldn't help it. I had to say it. Had to . . ." The next day he dropped from sight, leaving his six fellows to face the Spectrum Differentiation Phase, in which he would have excelled. This was an "irony of the training period," according to the dejected press officer, Lt. Dewey.

The remaining half-dozen were all civilians, two of them veterans of the Flying Tigers (in support capacities), three of them survivors of the post-Korean recession, and one an ardent pacifist. It was on the latter, James Madison Johnson, that the highest hopes were now pinned, for in addition to his talents as essayist and operetta composer, he was a light-skinned Negro. A Johnson orbit would certainly have served to elevate the first of his race to the highest position yet attained.

"Ironically" (as Lt. Dewey later explained it), Johnson had his greatest difficulty in the Color Description Phase. What did him

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in, after he had conveyed quite accurately the qualities of the first and second sunrise, was the third: "Again I sense a feeling of brilliance. Brilliance of light, form, space, yea, ideas. Ideas both white and black."

Six weeks before the launching there were but five men to choose from, though we were given to believe, for obvious reasons, that Johnson was still on the scene. Very soon thereafter were lost three of the finest candidates in the course of what must be considered in retrospect a completely arbitrary experiment with minimal bearing on what was to be accomplished. The Zero G Communication Phase tripped up both Flying Tiger alumni and one of the post-Korean survivors in its use of the following multiple-choice question:

17) Did you feel in the *first* moment of weightlessness:
a) A sense of release from earthly burdens and anxieties.
b) A oneness with Nature, God, Universal Law, and/or The Void.
c) An immediate desire to reassume earthly burdens and anxieties.
d) A sense of discovery, uniqueness, I amness.
e) Something quite indescribable to those never having been at Zero G.

The correct answer, of course, was a, b, *and* d, but the ill-starred trio, all being college graduates, selected only one of these apiece, and have since charged privately that they were tricked. This may well have been the case. Susceptibility to trickery was not a criterion which we in the pressroom were led to believe was relevant to the flight. Nonetheless, two exceptionally qualified men were still in the running. For this reason, after visiting with a finely dressed youth described only as a Washington "operative," the wash-outs were careful not to give their complaints public airing.

In the aftermath of the disaster which was to befall Friendship Eleven, there was considerable speculation (all unofficial) that the last two phases of the training program—*i.e.*, Spontaneity of Expression and Fidelity to Stated Duty—had been eliminated for fear of losing the last two astronauts. Total attrition would have involved a six-month wait for the next cycle, something which the Senate Space Committee, it was thought, would have dealt with unkindly.

The two qualifiers, one of whom would be selected (for maximum security) only minutes before blast-off, were closely guarded from our surveillance. Lt. Dewey, a capable chap on loan from the Marine Corps, did impart, however, the salient facts: Samson

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Mahong, 29, of Chinese and Sicilian parentage, was a sculptor and biographer from Logansport, Ind., divorced, two children, editor of a prize-winning anthology of the late Edgar Guest's selected works. Basil Fitchell, 52, only son of a Lutheran minister, was a prominent druggist and part-owner of a leading art gallery in Yonkers, N.Y., married, no children, had worked in the late 1940's for the Army Signal Corps, recipient of a Meritorious Award for three training films based on Rudyard Kipling's "Gunga Din."

Photographs indicated Mahong to be a rather thin-faced and tired man with no visible sense of humor, slightly stooped shoulders, carefully pressed dungarees, probably a person of solitude. Fitchell (in a snapshot taken eight years previously) bore himself proudly despite a spreading paunch, wore a slight smile on his fatly handsome face, blinked his eyes shut at the moment the camera snapped. No further information about the surviving candidates was given us, though one reporter from a large midwestern daily threatened to bring suit against Lt. Dewey if he did not disclose vital statistics of height, weight, and blood pressure. The lieutenant, a pleasant and conscientious fellow, explained politely that such information was not pertinent to the scope of the space shot, and most of us felt he was probably correct.

During the fortnight previous to the launching, we were barred from the missile base. Most of this waiting time was spent sunning, swimming, and spreading false alarms in crowded bars among envious colleagues who vaguely sensed the importance of our clandestine assignment. In time we were searched out in one of these bistros by a breathless messenger. The event, he said, would take place the following morning.

According to the notes, both Mahong and Fitchell were aroused from their rooms in a beachside motel at 4:38 a.m. to eat breakfast with Lt. Dewey, Mrs. Fitchell, and several unidentified Project officials. Lt. Dewey informed us later that Mahong consumed a very small bowl of spaghetti and rice, an end slice of unbuttered toast, and two cups of an unspecified soup. Fitchell had a softboiled egg, three strips of bacon (broken into the egg), some kind of crackers brought by his wife, and a tall glass of prune juice. The men talked of their good fortune, according to Lt. Dewey, to be participating in the flight, neither aware which would be the lucky pilot. Neither displayed any apprehension, although Mrs. Fitchell noted that her husband had suffered a mild seizure two weeks before.

A van rolled up to the motel at 5:52 and the two men climbed aboard eagerly. Mrs. Fitchell re-

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mained behind in the motel to watch television, though she knew the flight would not be telecast. Fitchell explained that it was not unusual for her to watch the early morning programs. Mahong was characteristically silent during the 14 minute ride to the base, but Fitchell talked quite animatedly, Lt. Dewey recalled, about the importance of the flight and his determination that he, and not Mahong, would make it.

At 6:06 the van pulled into the fog-enshrouded launching area. Project officials had emphasized that weather would not be a factor in the flight of Friendship Eleven. Most of us had overslept and when we arrived at 6:47 we heard scuffling within the van. Lt. Dewey stepped out and walked toward us with a cheerful grin. He appeated to be swaying slightly, but an aide rushed up with a container of black coffee which steadied his course. Three minutes later, Fitchell and Mahong, both in space suits, emerged also from the van. The sound of scuffling was never explained.

As Fitchell and Mahong neared the blockhouse, a tall General with two stars, whom we did not recognize, opened the door and whispered to them briefly. The three men disappeared through the doorway. Lt. Dewey escorted us to a partially rusted press trailer, related the astronauts' breakfast menu, composed a short quip about his being unaccustomed to public speaking, and hurried over to the control center. It was now one minute and twenty seconds past seven.

The trailer was fairly cold so we broke out a thermos bottle of rum for purposes of temperature adjustment. Through the small windows we observed Friendship Eleven on the launching pad, but fog hampered our vision. There seemed to be little activity around the pad and we concluded that the countdown was going extremely well. At 7:12 the loudspeaker clicked on and Lt. Dewey's voice, poised and lowered in pitch, could be heard clearly. He spoke very slowly with admirable detachment.

"One. Two. Three. Good morning. This is Control welcoming you to the premier flight of Friendship Eleven. You will note that telephones, teletypes, and typewriters are not functioning at present and will not function until the go signal is given. All of you must by now be aware of the significance of this morning's shot. It is, in the deepest sense, Man's first voyage into the unknown. Our purpose here is *not* to test technical devices, physiological stresses, or—"

Excited voices were babbling in the background and the loudspeaker clicked off. We jotted down a few notes and passed

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the thermos until 7:17 when Lt. Dewey resumed.

"Countdown is now at T minus 2 minutes. Basil Fitchell of Yonkers, N.Y., has been selected to be the astronaut aboard Friendship Eleven. This choice does not cast any . . . Listen here, Mahong —"

Again the voices. The loudspeaker ceased for only a few seconds, then clicked on again.

"Mr. Fitchell is now boarding Friendship Eleven."

Through the fog we saw Fitchell dashing for the elevator.

"Countdown is now at T minus 90 seconds. Mr. Fitchell has been selected from more than 800 applicants on the basis of sensitivity, sense of adventure—Countdown now holding at T minus 79 seconds. Countdown is holding at T minus 79 seconds to enable Mr. Fitchell to reach the capsule prior to blast-off."

Fitchell, we observed, was now climbing into the capsule. He did not look back. Fog closed in tightly around the launching pad and we could see nothing more.

"Countdown now moving again. Recovery vessels are already at full steam toward positions approximately 58 miles East-South-East of Pigeon Key, Florida, for pick-up after one orbit. Gentlemen, today for the first time Man sails into the spatial ocean as a voyager of old. Such as Columbus, Magellan, Disraeli. And Balboa. Men who, and there were also women, set down in their logs, odes, and private correspondence to friends and close relatives, the poetry of discovery. This is our tribute to—Countdown now at 53 seconds. This is our great purpose today: to record Man's true reaction to the new adventure of space. To send forth once again Man the poet, the restless dreamer, the creative spirit. That is our sole mission. Something that has been missing from —31 seconds to go, gentlemen. Our anchorman today is Mr.—is Astronaut First Class Sam Mahong of Logansport, Indiana. Prior to later censorship and final passage on national transmission, we shall make available to you simultaneous broadcast of orbital conversations between Mr. Fitchell and Mr. Mahong, subject to—12 seconds. Is Fitchell strapped in there? Mr. Fitchell is secured at ten. Nine. Eight. Seven. Six. Five. Four. Three. Two. One. Zero. Ignition. Lift-off. Best of luck, Mr. Fitchell."

The blast-off was unusually impressive, Lt. Dewey later told us. Through the fog we saw only a faint light which rose quickly and vanished. There was little tension to be felt, similar to, say, the departure of a shuttle flight from New York to Washington. Lt. Dewey's voice, betraying just a quiver of excitement, nudged us from quiescence.

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"This is Control. Mr. Fitchell is go for one orbit. Repeat. Mr. Fitchell is go. We have inserted him in outer space. Anchorman Mahong will commence earth-to-space interrogation."

Static blurred Mahong's opening and we heard what could only have been Fitchell's exuberant voice from high above us.

"This is Basil Fitchell in Friendship Eleven to Samson Mahong in Control. Eleven to Control. Fitchell to Mahong. Zero G Communication. I am feeling a sense of release from earthly burdens and anxieties, a oneness with Nature, God, Universal Law, and/or The Void, a sense of discovery, uniqueness, I amness, Roger."

Mahong spoke, we felt, with some distaste: "Control to Eleven. What is your attitude, Fitchell?"

Fitchell: "34 degrees. Exactly 34."

Mahong: "*Your* attitude!"

Fitchell: "Roger. Beg pardon. Capsule tilted to slightly less than 34."

Mahong: "*Your* attitude, you —"

Fitchell: "Over and out."

Mahong: "It's clear, General, you should have sent—"

The loudspeaker clicked off. Four of us, moving softly to avoid awakening a sleeping associate, reached for the telephones. The lines were still dead. Lt. Dewey's voice sounded again, this time in a soothing tone.

"Mr. Fitchell's attitude is described as one of serenity. Peace. A feeling of the pioneer at rest. He feels apart from, and yet part of, all the peoples of the world below him. Also a sense of universality with brothers in all systems above and beyond him. His perception is go."

Mahong's voice chimed in: "What does it feel like to be in space, Fitchell?"

Fitchell: "I can make out the coast of Africa. Now darkest Africa. India coming up. It cannot be described. Gunga Din."

Mahong: "What are you feeling?"

Fitchell: "I am go. I have a feeling of go. The sunrise was remarkable."

Mahong: "Colors. Quick!"

Fitchell: "The usual sunrise, but seen from a different angle. Usual but unusual. Interesting. The numbers on my instrument panel read 17-428-00-7039846-go."

Mahong: "Exultation! Any exultation?"

Fitchell: "Get off it, Mahong. I'm an astronaut now."

Loud shouts emitted from somewhere in the control center. A frenzied voice, unidentifiable to us, shrieked into the microphone:

"Fitchell! Stop playing with those manual controls!"

The loudspeaker shut off. We put our noses to the window as if for some reason we expected to see

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Fitchell come plummeting down on our heads from out of the fog. We knew by now he was well over the Indian Ocean. Four minutes later Lt. Dewey spoke again, with a trace of distraction.

"This is Control. Mr. Fitchell's orbit, for reasons yet unexplained, appears to be slipping southward. Such slippage, however, is no cause for alarm . . . Mr. Fitchell's altitude is now 120 miles over Australia . . . we believe it is Australia, yes . . . Now 110 miles . . . He may be . . ."

Mahong was shouting desperately: "Fitchell! What is it like?"

Fitchell's voice was faraway: "Wonderful! You press the button third from the left and a green light goes on!"

Mahong: "Is there a feeling of joy? Of sorrow?"

Fitchell: "The green light went off. Better have 'em double-check that."

Mahong: "Is there no onrushing into your senses, man, of some new, wildly new, concept?"

Fitchell: "Like Columbus, Magellan, Disraeli. And Balboa. Oscar Wilde. Madame Curie. Me, Basil Fitchell. According to my instruments, the heat in the capsule has now reached 203 degrees."

There was a scream from either the blockhouse or the capsule, it was hard to tell which, and the loudpseaker snapped off. After a long moment we heard Lt. Dewey once more:

"This is Control. The flight of Friendship Eleven was, for all intents and purposes, a stunning success, albeit we failed to complete the entire orbit. Velocity, altitude, attitude, fueling, and electronic coordination were maximal. Important information was transmitted and received on hypersensitive reaction to poetic experiential data. This will be fully calculated at a later date. The capsule descended, without benefit of parachute, approximately 42 miles due East of the New Zealand coastal line. No recovery vessels are present in the area. Scientists here at Control foresee no setback in our space program resultant from the dislocation of this capsule. No instrument packages were aboard which are not readily available in large quantities at Project warehouse. Newsmen will remain at their posts for a briefing to commence in eight minutes."

After the briefing, we all went over to the motel to check in on Mrs. Fitchell, who was watching a commercial announcement on "As The World Turns". She was saddened by our news, she said, but not really surprised.

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In the introduction to THE SURLY SULLEN BELL, his forthcoming collection of ghost stories, Russell Kirk says this: "More of the outer darkness than of the twilight zone, these are tales unabashedly Gothick. In them the reader may find hints of Mr. R. James, Henry James, and even Jesse James. I have no theory to account for ghosts and kindred bogles: I merely recognize the existence of such phenomenon, as do a good many psychologists nowadays. Much of my life has been spent in haunted places: in the most ghostly of towns, St. Andrews; in the Isle of Eigg, or the back lanes of Verona and Rome; in the curious castles and country houses of Fife; and especially in my own creaking old house at Mecosta, in Michigan, pervaded by the Swedenborgian genius of my ancestors." He has been called "one of the chief theoreticians of Conservative thought in America today," and is the author of the classical thriller, OLD HOUSE OF FEAR. This, the first of two stories of his which we shall print, tells of a war hero, no longer young or strong or very much interested in anything; a woman, by the calendar still on the threshhold of beauty and maturity, burdened with the poverty of the vanishing aristocracy and haunted by that which should have been her life but threatened her death; and of something less than love and more than courage which moved between them. This is a superior story.

"But the age of chivalry is gone. . . . The unbought grace of life, the cheap defense of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise is gone. It is gone, that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honor, which felt a stain like a wound, which inspired courage whilst it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil, by losing all its grossness." —Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*

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SORWORTH PLACE

by Russell Kirk

In defiance of a faint ancient charm that perfumes its name, Sorworth today is a dirty and dreary little town, fouled by the colliery since the pit was sunk and a blot of hideous industrial workers' houses began to spread about it. The lanes are half derelict, now that the pit approaches exhaustion. At a turn of the High Street, or down close off the Back Vennel, some fragments of old Scots masonry stand yet amidst a welter of hoardings and "fish restaurants" and corrugated iron roofing.

To damp Sorworth, of all places, Mr. Ralph Bain, M.C., had contrived to drift at the end of a month of purposeless nights in "family and commercial" hotels or bare village taverns across three counties. Drinks with strangers in one village, listless games of cards in the next town, inconsequential talks on buses or trains, dull glimpses of a pleasant wood there, an old church here: thus February had run out, and the next little pension check would be forwarded to him at Sorworth, which spot he had chosen at random as his address for the first few days of March.

Bain lounged by the door of the "King's Arms" in his old tweeds (with the cigarette-burns neatly darned) and felt the crack in his skull more vexatious than usual, and shifted his long legs languidly. Sorworth had nothing to show him. But what place had? He lit a cigarette, though he already had smoked three more this morning than he once resolved to allow himself out of the indispensable pension check.

At that moment, a girl came out of a provision shop across the square, walking obliquely past the market-cross in the direction of the "King's Arms"; and Bain, one hand cupped to shelter his match, his face inclined slightly downward, noticed the remarkable grace of her little feet. He glanced lazily up; then he threw away his match, let his cigarette go unlit, and instinctively straightened. He had not seen this lady before, but in that second it passed through his mind, whimsically, "Perhaps she's what drew me to Sorworth."

Surely a man might travel a great way without meeting such a face as hers—pale, very pale, with lips a glowing natural red, and black hair gathered with taste at

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the back of her head into a heavy role that rested upon her firm shoulders. Her chin, too, was delicately firm. She carried herself with a dignity that seems to be dying from modern life, looking straight ahead, as if in some reverie that walled her away from the grossness of Sorworth—yet not (Bain judged from her mouth) a reverie wholly pleasant. Among the mill girls and shop-assistants and bedraggled housewives in Sorworth, there was none anything like her; and few anywhere else. As she passed by the "King's Arms," she seemed to notice Bain; their eyes met, briefly; then she lowered her lashes, unsmiling, and was gone up the Vennel.

"Och, she's a bonnie one, Mrs. Lurlin." Happening to come to the door as the girl passed by, old MacLeod, who kept the "King's Arms," had followed Bain's long look. "There wullna be her like for aye, Mr. Bain—not at auld Sorworth Place." MacLeod shook his head portentously. In his youth he had been a gardener at some house of Lord Bute's, and he continued to hold the county families in profound respect, muttering sourly about Communists among the miners who drank in his bar.

"She's young to have the care of a big house," said Bain, relapsed into lethargy, and lighting his cigarette at last.

"Aye, and wee tae be widowed, sir. Noo the hoose—she canna hope tae keep it in the auld way, ye ken. Twa maids, and they carlines fu' o' girnings, sir: smà' comfort in a cauld hoose that na sae canny, when a's said. It will be rack and ruin, forbye, wi' half the grand hooses in the county." And MacLeod proceeded to expatiate on his favorite topics, the decay of old families and the follies of socialism.

"A widow?" put in Bain, lifting his heavy eyelids a bit. "She couldn't have been married a great while. What was this Lurlin like?"

"Be wha' he was, sir, the gentleman's dead, dead the year noo, Mr. Bain; and sma' gude claverin' o' men in the grave." That said, MacLeod turned back into his pub; but Bain, surprised at this reticence in a publican who ordinarily manifested a full share of Scottish censoriousness, followed him.

"He didn't die in the war?" inquired Bain.

"Na, na," said MacLeod, thus brought to bay; and, presently, "The drink, sir, the drink; that, and mair. Dinna mistake me, Mr. Bain. The Lurlins were braw auld blude; aye, but this Mr. Alastair Lurlin, he wasna o' the proper line, ye ken—na mair than a cousin. Mr. Hamish Lurlin, the auld laird, died seven years syne, and his twa sons were shot in Libya, first Alexander, then Hew. A' three death duties maun be paid, and the cousin comes tae what's left. Last year, this Mr.

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Alastair dies: mair duties. Weel, Mrs. Lurlin keeps the hoose, and the policies, and a bit moor besides. Ninety thousand acres Lurlin o' Sorworth had, before the first war. Noo, but a hoose wha's unco cauld and clammy. Come awa' upstairs, sir, if ye be sae fascinated"—this a trifle spitefully—"and ye can see the auld Place frae the attic, if ye ha' gude een."

From a garret window of the "King's Arms," they looked over the pantiles and corrugated iron roofs of the shabby town toward a serrated ridge some miles westward. On a flank of that hill, Bain just could make out the grey shape of a big ancient house, wraithlike against the heather and gorse and bracken. "There'll be nane aulder in the county," said MacLeod.

Bain went down alone to the parlor, sat some minutes before the doddering fire, and then addressed a note to Mrs. Lurlin, Sorworth Place. He was, he wrote truthfully enough, rather a dilettante in architecture; recently he had heard her house spoken of as remarkable; he would be glad to see it, if no inconvenience would be caused; and he would be in Sorworth the rest of the week. After some hesitation, he signed himself "M.C.": the Military Cross, after all, was one of his few remaining links with decent society, and he had the right to use it.

This letter posted, he went up to his room, brushed his old tweed suit, and glanced at himself in the mirror: the heavy eyes, the long and regular features weakened by lines of indecision, the defiant half-grin of bravado. He grimaced, and the suture in the back of his head—a memento of the shell fragment that had given him his pension—winced in sympathy. To escape from self-dislike, he went down to the bar, very like fleeing from the cell into the jailyard.

Late the next afternoon an answer to his note came, written in a small round hand, which said that Mr. Bain would be shown about Sorworth Place if he should call on Thursday afternoon, and was signed "Ann Lurlin." The firm signature put Bain in mind of Mrs. Lurlin's elegant, pale look; and he spent most of the intervening evening and night and morning in a reverie of nearly forgotten faces, men he had alienated by his negligence or his improvidence, women he had found hollow or who had found him exasperating. None of these ever thought of him now, even when dreaming before the fire. And why should they?

Shortly past noon on Thursday, he walked along an empty road toward the ridge called Sorworth Law; the road became a lane between high and crumbling stone dykes; and then he was at the entrance to a neglected park on the side of a hill, its gates vanished, its gatelodge empty, all its larger

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trees felled by some timber merchant and the stumps left among heaps of dead leaves. Bain turned up the drive, and soon he could see, on the bare slope above, the massive stone shape of the Place of Sorworth.

Two square towers, at either end; and between them, extending also far to the rear, an immense block of building, in part ashlar, but mostly rubble. None of this, except a fine large window above the entrance, was later than the seventeenth century, and most was far older. An intricacy of crowstepped gables, turrets, dormers, and chimneys confused one's eyes when they roved upward. All in all, the Place was an admirable example of the Scots mansion house unprettified by Balmoralism. A flight of heavy stone steps led up to the door, and on either side of the entrance projected a conical-capped turret, each supported at its base by an enormous corbel, curiously bevelled.

Some rods to the north could be made out to be what was left of a detached building, the roof of it gone—a chapel, perhaps. So far as Bain could see, there were only two entrances: the grand portal, and a small heavy door with a wrought-iron grill before it, that probably gave upon the kitchen. At the angles of either tower, musket-holes or arrow-loops, some blocked with mortar, the rest now closed with small panes of glass, flanked the entrance. The roofs were of ancient stone slabs.

Away at the back, the stout dykes of a walled garden closed the view, although Bain could hear the rushing of a burn somewhere in that direction. The lawn before the Place was unkempt, no better than pasture; and there, in one of the towers and even in the main block, a broken pane glinted in the afternoon sun, and all about the strong grey house hung a suggestion of neglect and impoverishment that would have been more clearly manifest, doubtless, had not the mansion been so severe and rugged in its very character. The huge window of what must be the great hall broke the solidity of the façade just above the main door. Between this window and the doorway below, Bain perceived, as he climbed the steps, a terribly weathered coat of arms executed in a soft red sandstone, appended to it some pious inscription in venerably barbarous Scots-Latin characters, most of them indecipherable. He could read only the two words which composed the last line: L-A-R-V-A R-E-S-U-R-G-A-T. *Larva Resurgat?* Why *larva,* rather than *spiritus?* The old lairds sometimes put things quaintly. He found no bell and so banged at the oaken door with a rusty knocker.

After an interval of leaden silence, the door was pulled ajar a bit, and a sour woman's face

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peeked round it. Bain asked to be announced. The fat maid let him into a little round room with naked stone walls, at the stairfoot, and locked the door again and then conducted him up a twisting stone stair in one of the entrance turrets—its treads scooped hollow by centuries of feet—to a gigantic vaulted chamber, well lighted: the hall. It was fitted with sixteenth-century panelling, painted with heraldic symbols and family crests. The air was cold, the yawning medieval firplace quite empty; here and there a Jacobean carved cupboard, or the polished surface of a table, or a tapestried chair endeavored to apologize for the emptiness of the Place. None of the furniture seemed in good repair. Bain sat gingerly on a Chippendale piece, while the maid scurried off.

After three or four minutes, Mrs. Lurlin came down to him, emerging from behind a door concealed by a hanging. A faint smile hovered on her fine lips, her eyes met his composedly, and Bain thought her most beautiful, in an antique fashion. "I'll show you the curiosities of this draughty place, Mr. Bain," she said, in a low voice with an agreeable suggestion of west coast accent about it, "if you'll pledge yourself to ignore dust and damp. I've nothing left but the house and the policies and a bit of moor, you know—not even a home farm."

Bain hardly knew what he said in reply, for she unsettled him, as if he had been shaken awake. Then Mrs. Lurlin led him up disused stairs and down into vaulted cellars and through chambers with mouldering tapestries and Lord knows where else. Almost all these interminable rooms were empty.

"Most was gone before the place became mine," said Mrs. Lurlin, without visible embarrassment, "but I had to sell what was left of the furniture, except for a few sticks in the really necessary rooms. I suppose the wreckers will buy the house when I'm dead. You can sell an eighteenth-century house, just possibly, in spite of rates, but not a behemoth like this. I can't afford to live here; but I can't afford to go away, either. Do you have some great barn of this sort, Mr. Bain?"

"I haven't even a cottage," Bain told her, "or a stick of furniture." He thought her black eyes remarkably candid.

She took him up to the summit of one of the towers, where they stood in the wind and looked over the braes that parallel the den of Sorworth Water as it twists down to the sharp-toothed long skerries where it meets the sea. From this height they could see quite clearly the surf on the rocks, and, some distance south, smoke from the fishing village of Sorworthness. Sorworth Water was in spate. Just at the tower's foot, the den veered

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right up to the castle, so that a stone which Bain tossed over the rampart bounced down a steep slope into the roaring burn. In the rough old days, the lairds of Sorworth had the security of a strongly situated house. "You're not afraid of heights, Mr. Bain?" asked this young woman.

"No," he said, "I've climbed a good deal."

"I fancy you're afraid of very little," she observed, lifting her eyebrows slightly. "Do you know that I happened to see you in the square two days ago? I thought you looked like a soldier. What were you?"

He had been a captain, he told her.

"Come down into the policies, Captain Bain," she said. As they descended, he bumped his head against a window ledge, and cried out involuntarily. She stopped, with an exclamation of sympathy.

"A mortar put a crack in my skull," Bain apologized, "and I'm still tender, and probably always will be."

"Does it pain you much, Captain Bain?"

"No; but perhaps I ought to tell you that it makes me a trifle odd, now and then. Or so people seem to think." He did not mind confiding this to her: perhaps it was the oddity he had just acknowledged, but at the moment they two seemed to him the only realities in an infinity of shadows.

"So much the better," she said, still lower—either that or something of the sort.

"I beg your pardon, Mrs. Lurline?"

"I mean this, Captain Bain: we seem to be birds of a feather. People hereabouts think I am rather odd. Sorworth Place is soaked in oddity. The maids won't stay. I've only one, now; the other went last week, and even Margaret, who's left, won't sleep in—she goes down to her son's cottage. I don't suppose you know why Janet went, unless someone at the "King's Arms" told you the gossip. Well, Janet wouldn't stay because she thought something whispered to her in the cellars. Poor timid creature! It was all fancy; for if anything were to whisper, you know, it would whisper to *me*. Would you like to see the garden? Most of it has gone back, of course."

They poked about the overgrown walks of the policies, talking of trifles, and presently strayed near the chapel ruin. "May I glance inside?" asked Bain.

"There's very little . . ." she answered, somewhat sharply. But Bain already had passed through the broken doorway. Some defaced sixteenth- and seventeenth-century monuments were fixed to the walls, and a litter of leaves encumbered the pavement. Where his feet scattered these, Bain noticed two or three ancient bronze rings fixed in stone slabs; and, being rather

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vain of his strength of arm, he bent, gripped one of them, and pulled upward. The stone lifted very slightly, though it was heavy, and when Bain let go, the slab fell back with a dull reverberation.

"O, for God's sake, stop!"

He swung round to her. That delicate pallor of her young face had gone grey; she clutched at the door moulding for support. Bain took her hands in his, to save her from falling, and led her toward the house. "What is it, Mrs. Lurlin?" He felt mingled alarm and pleasure thus to have a bond between them—even the terror in her eyes.

"You shouldn't have done that! He's under, just under!"

O course! In his wool-gathering, Bain had nearly forgotten this girl ever had a husband. He muttered something awkward, in his contrition: "I thought . . . with the leaves about, and everything so neglected, you know . . . I thought no one would have been laid there this century."

She was calmer now, and they re-entered the house through the kitchen door. "I know. They shouldn't have put anyone there, after all this time. His uncle and grandfather are in the kirkyard in the village, and his two cousins. But he had himself buried in the old crypt; he wrote it into his will. Do you understand why? Because he knew I'd loathe it. I think tea will be ready, Captain Bain."

At the tea table, in a pleasant corner room of one tower, she was cool and even witty. Bain saw in her a girl become woman in some short space, a year or two, perhaps; she was charming and possibly wise. But something stirred woefully, now and again, beneath this pretty surface. The afternoon went rapidly and smoothly. When it was time for Bain to leave, she went with him to the great door; and she said, deliberately, "Come to tea tomorrow, too, if you like."

Startled, Bain hesitated; and she caught him up, with just the hint of a flash in her eyes, before he had said anything. "But don't trouble, Captain Bain, if you're to be busy."

"I'm never busy, Mrs. Lurlin," he told her, unable to repress his old arrogant grin. "Shall I be frank? I was surprised that you should ask me. I'm thoroughly *déclassé*."

She looked at him steadily. "I believe you're decent. I have no friends, and I hate to be solitary here, day on day. I'm afraid to be alone."

"I wouldn't take you to be timid, Mrs. Lurlin."

"Don't you understand? I thought you'd guessed." She came a trifle closer to Bain; and she said, in her low sweet voice, "I'm afraid of my husband."

Bain stared at her. "Your husband? I understood—I thought that he's dead."

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"Quite," said Ann Lurlin.

Somewhere in that Minoan maze of a house, a board or table creaked; the wind rattled a sash; and this little room at the stairfoot was musty. "You know, don't you?" Mrs. Lurlin whispered. You know something's near."

Bain stayed on at the "King's Arms," and every afternoon he walked up the barren law to Sorworth Place for tea. Some days he came early, and with Mrs. Lurlin he tramped over the Muir of Sorworth, talking of books and queer corners and the small things of nature. Ann Lurlin, he perceived, was one of those women, now unhappily rare, who delight in knowing about squirrels' habits and in watching field mice and peeking into birds' nests, with a childlike curiosity quite insatiable.

On one afternoon, they reached the summit of the Law and looked back upon the Place. A vast twisted oak, still bare of new leaves, stood halfway between them and the house, its black branches outlined like fingers against the grey of the distant mansion. This was the finest of many brave views on the Muir of Sorworth, and they could see the colliery, a dismal smudge far down in the valley, and the red roofs of Sorworth village, at this remove still seeming the douce market town that it once had been. In the several days that had elapsed since Bain's first call, Mrs. Lurlin had not touched upon the theme of her parting shot at the stairfoot, and Bain had been content to let that field lie fallow. But now she clutched his arm, and he sensed that the mood was upon her again.

She was looking intently toward a rise of ground this side of the oak. "Do you—" She checked herself, and said, instead, "Do I seem rational to you. Captain?"

She did, he told her; but he said nothing of all the rest he felt about her.

"I am going to put your confidence to the test." He observed that her charming lips were pressed tightly together, when for a moment she was silent. "Do you think you see anything between us and that tree?"

Bain studied the face of the moor. At first he detected nothing; then, for just an instant, it seemed as if some large stooping creature had hurried from one hillock to another, perhaps its back showing above the bracken. "I don't know, Mrs. Lurlin," he said, a bit too quickly. "A dog?"

"It didn't seem like a dog to you, now, did it?" She looked into his eyes, and then turned her sleek head back toward the moor.

"No. I suppose it's a man out ferreting." But he let his inflexion rise toward the end of the sentence.

"No one keeps ferrets here, Captain Bain. I'm glad you saw it, too,

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because I feel less mad. But I don't think anyone else would have made it out. You saw it because you know me so well, and—and because of that crack in your poor head, perhaps. I fancy it makes you sensitive to certain things."

Bain thought it kindest to be blunt: he asked her what way she was rowing.

"Let's sit down here on the heather, then," she went on, "where we can see for a good way-round. I'd rather not talk about this when we're in the house. First I ought to say something about my husband."

Perceiving that all this hurt her, Bain murmured that he had been told her late husband had been no credit to the family.

"No," said Ann Lurlin, *"no.* Have you read Trollope, Captain? Perhaps you remember how he describes Sir Florian, in *The Eustace Diamonds.* Sir Florian Eustace had only two flaws—'he was vicious, and he was dying.' Now Lizzie Eustace married Florian knowing these things; but I didn't know them about my husband when I married. I hadn't any money, and no relative left worth naming. Alastair—though he looked sick, even then—had manners. I don't suppose I wanted to look very closely. Afterward, I found he was foul."

Bain dug his fingers into the heather.

"If we were to walk down toward that tree," said Mrs. Lurlin, after a silence, "I don't think we'd meet anything, not yet. I don't believe there's any—any *body* to what we saw. I fancy it was only a kind of presentiment. I've been alone here, more than once, and caught a glimpse of something and made myself hunt; but nothing ever was there."

"Supposing a thing like that could—could rise," Bain interjected, stealthily surveying the bracken, "why should he have power over you? You're not foul."

She did not seem to hear him. "He wanted everything to be vile, and me to be vilest of all. Sometimes I think it was the pain of dying in him that made him try to befoul everything. When he found he couldn't break me, he cursed like a devil, really as if he were in hell. But I stayed with him, to his last day; I was his wife, whatever he was. Most of the time he lay with his eyes shut, only gasping; but in the evening, when he was nearly gone, I could see he was trying to speak, and I bent down, and he smirked and whispered to me, 'You think you've won free, Ann? No. Wait a year. I'll want you then.'"

"A year?" asked Bain.

"It will be a year next Friday. Now I'm going to confess something." She turned her lithe body so that her eyes looked directly into Bain's. "When I saw you in the square, I wondered if I could

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use you. I had some notion that I might stick a life between myself and . . . You looked no better than a daredevil. Do you mind my saying that? Something in me whispered, 'He was made to take chances; that's what he's good for.' I meant you to come to see me. I don't suppose it flatters you, Ralph, to have been snared by a madwoman."

"No," Bain answered her. "You're not mad. We both may be dolls in someone's dream, Ann, but you're not mad."

"And you'd best go, for good," she told him. "I don't want to stain you with this, now that I know you. I want you to go away."

"You can't dismiss me," Bain contrived to grin his old grin. "I'm in your net. But how am I to get into your mind, Ann? How am I to stand between you and what your memory calls up?"

"If it were only memory and fancy, I could bear it." She shut her eyes. "A glimpse of him in a dream, a trick of imagination when I turn a dark corner, the shape dodging on the moor—those might pass away. But I think he's coming . . . Now you'll know I'm fit for Bedlam. I think he's coming—well, in the flesh, or something like."

"Nonsense!" said Bain.

"Very well, then, I'm mad. But you'll bear with me, Ralph? Perhaps something in me calls him; possibly I even control him, after a fashion. But I think he'll be here Friday night."

Believing she might faint, Bain put his big hand behind her head. "If you really think that, Ann, leave the house, and we'll go to Edinburgh or London or where you like. We'll leave now."

"Where could I live?" She nodded toward the grey castle. "It's all I have—not even enough to pay my rent anywhere else. And then, it would make no difference. I think he'd follow me. He wants life to drag down with him. Either he must break me, or he must be broken somehow himself, before he'll rest."

Bain sat awhile, and presently asked, "Do you want me to watch in Sorworth Place on Friday night, Ann?"

She turned away her head, as if ashamed of her selfishness. "I do."

It passed through his mind that she might think he was making a rake's bargain with her, over this wild business. A bargain he might have made with another woman, or even with this one at another time, he admitted to himself, but not with a woman beside herself with terror. "You understand, Ann," he blurted, "that I'm asking nothing of you, not now."

"I know," she whispered, her face still averted. "I'm offering nothing—nothing but your death of fright." Then she tried to laugh. "Who'd think, to look at you, Cap-

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tain Bain, that you're so very proper? I'd rather be scandalous than damned."

Thus it was settled; and though they two walked and talked and drank their tea on the Tuesday and the Wednesday and the Thursday, they did not mention again her past or their future. Whatever sighed in some passage or cupboard of that old house, whatever shifted and faded across the moor—why, such intimations they ignored, speaking instead of the whaups that cried from the sky above them or of the stories they had loved as children.

Old Sorworth Place still was fit to stand a siege, Bain told himself as he mounted the staircase between the turrets on Friday afternoon. The lower windows could not be forced, the doors were immensely stout; anything that had substance might scrape and pound in vain outside, all night, once the bolts were shot home. Ann Lurlin herself admitted him, and they went to sit in her little study, and the hours fled, and their tea, untasted, grew cold; and at length they heard fat Margaret shuffle down the kitchen passage, open the door, and make her way through the policies toward the distant sanctuary of her son's cottage.

Then Ann's eyes seconded Bain's glance, and he ran down the stair to the kitchen door, locked it, and made sure the great door was well bolted. He returned to the study and the pale girl with the great black eyes. The night was coming on. They could think of very little to say. Here was Bain locked in for the night with the woman that he most desired, though he had known many women, too well. "Yet Tantalus' be his delight . . ." Unless she sought him, he would not touch her, in this her hour of dismay.

"Where will you stay?" asked Bain, when the sun had sunk quite below the level of the little west window of the study.

"In my bedroom," she said, drearily enough. "There's no place safer."

Her room was in the southern tower. Bain's mind reviewed the plan of the Place. "Is there a way into the tower except through the great hall?"

She shook her sweet head. "There were doors on the other levels, once, but they were blocked long ago."

This made his work easier. "Well, then, Ann, your bogle will have to swallow me whole before he opens the door behind the hanging, and I'm a sour morsel." He didn't admit the possibility of fleshly revenants, Bain told himself, and if he could keep her safe from frenzy this one night, she might be safe forever after.

Solemn as a hanging judge she looked at him for what seemed a

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long time. "You shouldn't stay here, Ralph; I shouldn't have let you." She ran her little tongue along her dry lips. "You know I never can be anything to you." This was said with a kind of frozen tenderness.

These words hurt him beyond belief; and yet he had expected them. He saw himself as if in a mirror: his shallow, tired, defiant face, his frayed clothes, every long lazy inch of himself, futile and fickle. "No," said Bain, managing a hoarse laugh, "no, Ann, of course you can't—or not tonight. I meant to sit outside your door."

Biting her lip, she murmured, "Not tonight, nor any other night, ever."

"Well," Bain said, "you needn't drive the point home with a hammer. Besides, you might care for me in better days."

She continued to look at him as if beseeching mercy. "You don't understand me, Ralph. It's not you: why, so far as I still can care for any man, I care for you. Anyway, I'm grateful to you as I've never been to anyone else, and I'd give myself to you if I could. It's not what you think. It's this: after having a year with him, I couldn't bear to be anything to a man again. It would be dreadful. I can't forget."

"Don't tell yourself that." Bain spoke slowly and heavily. "It won't be true. Given time, this night and your life with that—that fellow will wash away. But I suppose I'll be gone, and good riddance."

She lit a candle. Paraffin lamps and candles were the only lighting in the Place. Now, he knew, their night of listening and guarding must commence. "You still can go, Ralph," she told him, softly. "A moment ago I hinted that I felt something for you, but that was because I tried to be kind. Kind! Well, whatever makes you do this for me? In honesty, I don't love you, though I should."

"Bravado," Bain said, "and boredom, mixed." He was glad she could not see his eyes or his mouth in that feeble candlelight. "Now up with you, and let me play my game of hide-and-seek, Ann Lurlin." He went with her to the door behind the hanging, and watched her ascend to the first turn of the stair. Looking back upon him, she contrived a smile of understanding, and was gone to her room. Alone, he felt a swelling of confidence.

"Come on, if you like, Alastair Lurlin, Esq.," he thought. "I'm your man for a bout of creep-mouse."

Before settling himself in the hall for the night, he must make sure that no one was playing tricks, a remote possibility he had kept at the back of his mind, by way of a forlorn link with the world of solid things. So, taking his little electric torch from a pocket, he proceeded to inspect

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every chill corner of the Place, apart from Ann's south tower, with a military thoroughness. Certain corners in this pile were calculated to make one wary; but they were empty, every one. After half an hour or so, he found himself looking from a loophole in the north tower, and across the main block of the house he saw a light glowing from Ann's window. There she would be lying in a passion of dread. But nothing should force itself upon her this night.

Returning to the main block, he listened: nothing. "For a parson's son," he thought, "Ralph Bain gets into peculiar nooks." Then he opened a door into the great hall.

O God! Something white was by the stair door, even then slipping out of the hall into the turret. He flung himself across the hall, down the stair, and leaped the last twist of the spiral to overtake that white fugitive. It was Ann Lurlin, pressing herself against the great door.

She shuddered there in her nightgown, her slim naked feet upon the damp flagstones. For a tremulous instant he thought his own desperate longing might have stirred some impulse in her: that she might have come to him out of love or gratitude. But a glance at her face undid his hope. She was nearly out of her mind, a tormented thing fumbling at the oak, and when he took her by the arms, she panted spasmodically and managed to say, "I don't know why I'm here. I wanted to run out, run and run."

For only a moment he pressed her body to his. Then, picking her up, he carried her to the door behind the hanging, and thrust her in. "Go back, Ann: I've promised you." She put both her chill hands in his, looked at him as if she were to paint his picture, and kissed him lightly with cold lips. Then she crept up the steps. He bolted the little tapestried door from his side.

Well, back to sentry-duty. What hadn't he inspected in this house? The cellars. Down you go, Captain Bain. They were fine old Scots vaults of flinty stone, those cellars, but he detested them this night. Outside, a light rain was falling. He sat upon a broken stool in the cellar that had been a medieval kitchen, shadowed by the protruding oven. This is the ragtaggle end of chivalry, Captain Bain—a worn-out fool crouching in a crumbling house to humor a crazy girl. Then something crunched on the gravel outside the barred window. From old-soldierly habit, Bain kept stock-still in the shadow.

He saw it plain, so that there could be no possibility of illusion; and he asked himself, in a frantic sensation of which he was at once ashamed, "What have you got into Ralph Bain, for the sake of a pretty little thing that won't be yours?"

It was a face at the slit of a win-

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dow, damn it: a sickening face, the nose snubbed against the glass like a little boy's at a sweetshop. The eyelids of this face were drawn down; but while Bain watched, they slowly opened, as if drawn upward by a power beyond themselves, and the face turned awkwardly upon its neck, surveying the cellar. Somehow Bain knew, with an immense temporary relief, that he was not perceived in his sanctuary back of the oven, supposing the thing could "perceive" in any ordinary sense. Then the face withdrew from the window, and again Bain heard the gravel crunch.

Some little time elapsed before Bain could make his muscles obey him. The crunching grew fainter, and then, hearing with a preternatural acuity, he made out a fumbling at the small kitchen door down the passage. But it was a vain fumbling. Something groped, lifted the latch, pressed its weight against the barrier. The stout door did not budge. At this, Bain experienced a reckless exultation: whatever was outside in the night obeyed in some sort the laws of matter. "Go on, you dead hands," thought Bain, wildly. "Fumble, damn you, push, scratch like a cat. You'll not get at her." Rising from his stool, Bain tiptoed down the passage, and heard the stumbling feet in the gravel, moving on. Would it try the big door? Of course. Let it try.

Bain told himself he had to look at what was outside; and he made his way to the lowest loophole of the left-hand turret, which commanded the steps. There was moon enough to show him the stairs, and they were empty. But the great door, a trifle ajar, was just closing *behind* whatever had entered.

He sucked in his breath, and believed he would go mad. "O Lord! O Lord! It's in, and I'm done for!" These phrases thrust through his consciousness like hot needles. Yet a dogged rationality contended against them. However had the door been forced? Then he thought of Ann in her nightgown. Before he had caught her, she must have drawn the bolt; and he, in his love-sick anxiety, had forgotten to try it. Collusion between the living and the damned: this conjecture of treachery woke in him, and he felt momentarily that all his days with Ann Lurkin had been part of a witch's snare. But he rejected the doubt. Whatever had moved Ann, whether simple terror and a foolish hope of fight, or some blind impulse forced upon her out of the abyss, no deceit lay in her.

These sterile reflections occupied no mensurable time. Face it out, Bain: nothing else for it. With luck, he could be in the hall first. He was up the kitchen stair and through an anteroom as fast as ever he had moved in his life.

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An uncertain moonlight showed him the hall, and he was alone in it, barring the way to the tapestried door; but then the door from the turret stair opened. Something entered.

Just inside the hall, the thing paused heavily. Light enough came from the great window to outline it; Bain had not the heart to pull out his torch; indeed, he could not move at all. Again he looked upon the sagging face he had seen at the cellar-loop. The thing was clothed in a black suit, all mildewed. Its slow body seemed to gather itself for new movement.

Who should be master, who should move first—these points might decide the issue, Bain hoped: perhaps a horrid logic governed this contest. Ralph Bain then compelled himself to take two steps forward, toward the middle of the hall. He looked at the dark shape by the window, and twice tried to speak, and on the third attempt a few broken words croaked from his throat: "Time you were properly buried, old man."

No answering sound came. Bain flexed his arms, but could not force himself to advance further. He could discern no expression upon the face: only a blackened mask obedient to some obscene impulse from a remote beyond. How long they two stood there, Bain did not know. But presently the thing swung about awkwardly, lurched over the threshold, and was gone back to the darkness of the stair-turret.

Bain thanked God with all sincerity. Now who was the hunter and who the quarry? The will was in him to make an end of this thing. Would it have gone back to the door and out into the rain? Bain listened. Yes, there came a stumbling on the stair—from above. What was it trying for? And then Bain knew. Ah, what a fool he was! It was ascending to the roofs, and would cross the slabs to the woman whose passionate terror perhaps animated its shape.

Bain went after it, slipping and bruising himself in his urgency; but as he leaped up the spiral toward the higher stories of the north tower, he felt a cold draught sweeping down upon him. The thing had got open a window, and must be upon the roof. Bain found that window, and stared into the night.

Now the rain fell heavily, and down at the foot of the wall, Sorworth Water moaned and gleamed. From Ann Lurlin's room, the candlelight cast some faint radiance upon the stone slabs of the sharp-peaked roof; and the glimmer was enough to show Bain a sodden bulk inching its way along the gutter toward the south tower, a footing precarious enough in daylight. The ruined face was averted from Bain, whatever power moved the thing being in-

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tent upon that piteous lighted window.

What propelled Ralph Bain then was an impulse beyond duty, beyond courage, beyond even the love of woman. He dropped from the window upon the wet and shimmering slabs, clambered along the gutter, and flung himself upon the dark hulk. Bain heaved with all the strength that was in him. Together, living and dead, they rolled upon the mossy old stones; together they fell.

A glimpse of the great stone wall; a flash of the savage burn; then explosion of everything, opening to the blessed dark.

Early on Saturday morning, a lone fisherman out of Sorworthness, rowing near the reefs that lie off the mouth of Sorworth Water, thought he perceived some unpleasant mass lying nearly submerged in the tangle of kelp among the rocks. But the sea boils nastily there, and the fisherfolk of Sorworthness are of the old legend-cherishing sort, and this man recalled certain things muttered by the arthritic old hag in the chimney corner, his mother. Rather than rowing closer in, then, he worked his boat round and made back toward the decayed little harbor.

Some hours later, having got two friends into his boat for company, he returned to the skerries for a closer look; but the tide had ebbed, and if anything human or human-like had lodged earlier among the rocks, now it was gone forever. Whatever ends in the boiling sea upon the reefs, having tumbled down the den of Sorworth Water, never wakes again.

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Card Sharp

Being a telepathic tape of a "lizard's" thought processes monitored after contact with one of the local peasants. The student will find this significant in view of the subsequent invasion fiasco.

The skarl put his woman's
Reap in the pot to back his bluff
With the ace of demons
Showing and tilted the rock carafe
Forty-five degrees and more
Then wiped his green stubble
With half a hand as if sure
Of everything above the table.

I watched his eyelid's
Shuffle pluck at my four harps,
Stacking the dungsmoke odds
In the greedy warps
Of his discarded mind,
And I almost threw in my hand.
It was too easy, like
Taking venom from a snake.

I could have raised him
But the only thing he had left
Was his woman and damn
Me if I wanted her. I laughed
And called with my platinum
Distorter, the one he had been eyeing,
And, spitting upon the linoleum,
Turned my hole card. Great Gruing!

The one-eyed jack of cubes
Transfixed me with a stare
Of utter ruin. After sobs
And small convulsions, my robot ear
Became aware of words: "O.K., Liz,"
The skarl was saying, which is
Not my name of course, "that
Does it," and raked in the pot.

That was three revs ago
And I have come to no conclusions
Except that my wattles are turning grey
And my brain has lesions,
Or perhaps I need glasses
Or else I should return to the creche
For my second hatching, or else hypnosis
Painted that harpshot flush

Upon my eyelids. Still
Who would think a skarl
Could turn the trick, his wet
Eyes blinking in their nest of fat
Like skittish mice, his soft
Features prey to every sculp and chip
Of emotion. Well, it looks like thrift
Is the order of the day, at least until the Drop.

—Walter H. Kerr

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The fourteen years which Terry Carr spent as a science fiction amateur before writing his first professional SF story (he is now twenty-five) were obviously not wasted. In that germinal period he gained a mastery of field and form which yet eludes many who have been writing and successfully selling for even longer. At the moment it would be difficult to cite any recent short story which portrays an alien (in the SF sense of an intelligent extraterrestrial) as vividly and convincingly as this one does, or the alienness of another planet with as much subtle economy. "There are jelly-stains on the back of this MS [Terry Carr wrote in his accompanying letter], which merely proves that I am still the same simple, unspoiled country boy that I was before I moved to the big city and started submitting to men with beards"—a reference to this editor's pronounced pogonotropic, and no other, tendencies. "I have a feeling somebody is going to say that 'Hop-Friend' is an answer to 'water-brothers,' [in Robert Heinlein's STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1961] but it ain't. The vague parallel didn't even strike me till I'd finished. Anyway, a hop-friend would be a beer-brother . . . I hope you like it." We sure do.

HOP-FRIEND

by Terry Carr

ON THE TENTH DAY OF THE construction job out on the edge of Syrtis Major they found a Marshie watching them. He might have been there ever since they'd trucked in their equipment and thrown up a bubble and temporary toilets, but they never did find out.

The Marshies flicked in and out of sight so rapidly that you had to be looking right where they ap-

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peared to see them at all, most of the time. They hopped around like fireflies, stopping for two seconds or two minutes, standing almost still with their angular birdlike heads cocked to one side, and then they'd be gone, turning up almost instantly fifteen feet away, still with their heads cocked looking at you. They were unnerving to most of the Earthmen, and a couple of years back one nervous kid in Iguana, near the Bald Spot, had taken a shot at one of them—missed him and burned hell out of one wall of a building. The Marshies hadn't been around the Earth towns much since then.

Not that they had ever been especially chummy. The Marshies were partially telepathic and they could manage the Earth languages well enough, but they seldom bothered. For the most part they just didn't seem interested. Every now and then you'd see one of them pause for a minute in the settlements, and maybe he'd say, "Hi, Harry," or "Nice weather this year," but they never stopped to talk about anything. The Earthmen had been on the planet for over ten years, but all the government could tell you about the Marshies was that they had some towns out in the mountains somewhere, they were trisexual, and their lifespan was about thirty years.

Walt Michelson had been wondering about them ever since he'd landed on the planet back with the first wave, when he'd come with his parents. Michelson had been twelve then, busy looking around and asking questions every time his eyes lit on something. When he was fourteen he saw a Marshie—one of them landed right next to him at his brother's funeral and stood completely still for almost ten minutes while the service droned on. It had been out on the flatlands, where the heavy brown dust was sometimes two inches deep and you had to raise your voice to be heard in the thin air. The Marshie had watched the interment rites silently, standing off to one side, and when it had all been over he had looked at Michelson and said "Yes," and disappeared.

Michelson's father had been a building contractor . . . a pretty good one, successful enough that he could have sent Walt back to Earth by the time he was eighteen. But Walt hadn't wanted to go; all he remembered of Earth was how crowded it was, how many policemen there were, how many laws and taxes and taboos built up over the centuries. When he'd been on Earth his father hadn't had much money, and that colored his feelings toward the home planet too, but basically he liked Mars because there was *room* here . . . no walls, real or legislated, to keep a man standing still. So he'd stayed on Mars, and learned the

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building trades, and he was a foreman this year and would be more next year. He didn't give a damn about Earth.

Now he was working on building a town out here at the base of the hills, on a site which somebody had decided would be an important trade outpost. Some of the drainage from the icecap reached this area, too, so there might be some chance for agriculture. The city had been planned in detail back at Dry Puget, but nobody had thought that there were any Marshies in the area.

They'd noticed him first by the puffs of dust rising in a line leading from the foothills straight to the building site. The Marshies travelled in a peculiar half-leaping half-flying fashion, and when they touched down and jumped off again they kicked up small clouds of dust. One of the workmen saw those clouds coming toward them and reported to Michelson, who got his binocs and watched the Marshie coming. He wasn't long in arriving.

He lit right outside the bubble and stood looking for a minute, then disappeared and skipped right in through one of the airlocks where they were removing the dirt from the diggings inside. He turned up next to the big shovel for a few seconds, disappeared when one of the men suddenly yelled, reappeared over by the lumber yard next to the foundation work going on in the south quarter, then outside the truck depot, and finally at the door of the contractor's office where Michelson had been going over the drawings for the street layout. Michelson looked up at him and the Marshie cocked his head and stared back.

The Marshie was a faded orange in color, his body covered with a heavy fur through which the powerful muscles showed clearly. His eyes, large and liquid black, were set on the sides of his head, and his nose and mouth were almost indistinguishable under the fur of the face. He had long legs, thin but powerful, giving him a stature of over seven feet; his large brown wings folded down over his back softly like a cloak. He was indistinguishable from any other Marshie that Michelson had ever seen, but that was undoubtedly because the Marshies were so seldom around.

As the Marshie continued to stand silently looking at him Michelson was struck with the humor of the tableau, and he grinned and nodded. "Welcome to our humble diggings," he said.

The Marshie disappeared, leaving two deep footprints in the dirt outside the door where he had kicked off. Michelson got up and went to the door, saw the alien light a couple of times going across the large inner yard, and then he apparently hopped out through the airlocks again. Michelson raised

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his binocs from the strap around his neck, but he was unable to track the Marshies' dust-clouds in their erratic jumps out on the flat. They seemed to head toward the hills again but he couldn't be sure.

Michelson shrugged and turned back to the plans on the desk. The Marshie was no immediate problem to him; if he continued to show up there might be trouble among the construction workers—the Marshies appeared and disappeared so abruptly that they could upset a whole crew in a few hours—but for the moment Michelson wasn't going to worry about it. He had a more pressing problem.

One of the field men had found that the northeast quarter was right over a large water-deposit and it would require some pretty drastic structural modifications or maybe even abandoning that part of the site altogether. There was bedrock not too far down, and the yearly icecap drainage collected there; the water wasn't enough to be useful as a supply for the planned city, but the pocket was large enough to undermine any foundations they might try to put in there.

He'd already checked the specifications and found that any pumping system they could install to periodically drain the pocket would be in a cost bracket making it necessary to get an okay from the builder clear back in Dry Puget . . . and that could hold up the work long enough to make them miss their deadline. No, there had to be some way to block the seepage before the water got to the pocket, so that it could be drained once and for all.

Dammit, it was just his luck to run into trouble with water on Mars, where that was the last thing you expected. Well, tomorrow he'd get together with a couple of the surveyors and see what could be done.

The Marshie was back the next day, shortly after the sun rose darkly over the low hills. There was so little light at that early hour that no one saw him coming and the first thing they knew of his presence was when he landed for a moment in an airlock and a driver slammed on his brakes to avoid hitting him—which wasn't really necessary, since the Marshie had jumped off again immediately, but a human driver's muscular reactions weren't geared for Marshie pedestrians. The Marshie skipped on in through the interconnecting locks.

He came down beside Michelson as he was going across the yard toward the diggings, and Michelson stopped. He turned and cocked his head at the alien, mocking his stance, and after a moment said, "I'll give you a gate pass if you want."

The Marshie regarded him with his big dark left eye and shook his

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wings lightly. "Hello, Walt," he said, and skipped off. Michelson shrugged and went on across the yard, but the Marshie came back a minute later, touched down and said, "They aren't so humble," and disappeared again.

Mike Deckinger, who was in charge of the trucks, was nearby and he came over frowning. "He's going to drive us nuts if he keeps that up," he said. "We could tighten up the airlock sequence and maybe keep him out that way."

Michelson shook his head. "That would just slow down the works. Leave him alone; he's just looking."

"Yeah, but why?" said Deckinger, and walked off.

Harris and Loening, the two surveyors, were waiting for Michelson at the diggings. They were good men, both in their thirties and well-trained both on Earth and this planet. Harris was heavyset, with a ruddy, swarthy face and close-cropped black hair; Loening was taller, broad-shouldered, with bony, angular features and dark eyes that seemed to peer out from shadowed caves. Michelson explained the problem to them.

"I want to go outside and see if we can trace the drainage," he concluded. "Find a place where we can dam or rechannel it."

"That'll involve drilling," Loening said.

Michelson raised an eyebrow at him. "Probably. Unless you want to try a dousing rod." Loening grunted disgustedly.

"Well, let's take a walk out there first anyway," Harris said. They started back across the yard toward the north airlocks. Since they might be out for some time they each donned facemasks and picked up small tanks of oxygen before they checked through.

The Marshie hopped through ahead of them.

He passed them in the second lock and was waiting for them when they emerged onto the flat outside. He stood off about twenty feet, ruffling his wings in a way which seemed impatient to Michelson, and skipped back and forth past them as they set off toward the low hills, following the line of the water as closely as it had been traced in the preliminary survey. Loening walked stolidly, his head down and frowning, but Harris didn't seem to pay any attention to the alien. Michelson watched for him as he walked, and thought.

This hop-guy seemed a lot more interested in the construction works than the Marshies had ever been before. What was that he had said back in the compound? "They aren't so humble." What did that mean?

He'd come in from the hills, and the Marshies were supposed to live somewhere in a mountainous area. This one, maybe? Perhaps the Marshies were taking a definite interest in this site because the

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Earthmen had finally started getting near their own area.

And if so, just what kind of an interest were they taking?

The water had been traced back to the foot of the hills, but no further. On foot in the low Martian gravity the Earthmen made it that far in about half an hour. There was a thin, cold wind out here which cut through their heavy jackets and ruffled Michelson's light hair, but it didn't stir the dust very much. The air on Mars lacked body; once you got used to it you could breathe it well enough if you didn't exert yourself, but if you wanted to smoke a pipe you had to do it when you were inside a bubble or it would go out every time.

They stopped and rested at the base of the first hill, where dry rocks had tumbled down the slope during the ages and collected at the bottom. Loening loosened his pack and swung it off his shoulder to the ground. He nodded up at the rising hills and said, "The first thing to do is scout around there and chart the rock stratifications."

"Do you think the drainage comes through the mountains?" Michelson asked him.

"Might; can't tell offhand. We've been walking on solid rock for a mile or more—that means the water is under rock for a ways out there, and the channel could turn off anywhere. Maybe it skirts the hills; that's one thing I want to check. If the stratifications here show that these hills rose during an upheaval, the chances are that the water channel does go around them."

Michelson nodded. "Well, we can get the preliminary scouting done faster if we split up. I'll try going through the pass up there."

Loening and Harris rose with him, and they set off separately. As Michelson started up the slope he heard Harris call to him, "If you see our Marshie again, ask him where the hell the water comes from."

Michelson grinned back down at him. "I think I will," he said.

He climbed slowly up the rough slope, now and then cutting in his oxygen supply for a few breaths. The rocks here were bulky and weathered—the kind of weathering that happened, on Mars, only with the passage of ages. They stood out like silent gray beasts against the morning shadows. Michelson was soon out of sight of their starting-point, but he followed the natural pass and made a rough map as he went, noting the rock formations and what he could see of the stratifications. It was all a jumble, as far as he could tell; some of the sheer rocksides seemed to show evidence of having been pushed up as Loening had suggested and others didn't. And the direction of the stratifications varied apparently without pattern. Well, figuring out

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the pattern would be the surveyors' job.

At a small level spot he stopped to rest, and as he sat looking over his rough-sketched map he heard a sound and the Marshie said beside him, "Most of these hills have been here for two million years."

Michelson looked up, carefully registering no outward surprise. "Whose years?" he said. "Yours or mine?"

The Marshie shook his wings and hopped a little way to one side, still regarding him with one dark eye. "We do not count years."

Michelson nodded at him. "Do you have names?"

"No," said the Marshie, and disappeared. Michelson waited for him to show up again, but after a few minutes he shrugged and stood up to go. It looked like there was still a lot of area to be covered up here.

The Marshie landed again. "I am faster than you," he said.

"That's true," Michelson said. He started walking on upward through the rocks. "Do you live near here?"

"Perhaps," said the Marshie. "I am faster than you."

"Near" could mean fifty miles to a Marshie, Michelson reflected. Well, it had been a fair answer then.

"Where does the water come from?" he said.

The Marshie disappeared.

He didn't show up again for the rest of the day. Michelson followed the pass up into the hills for a mile or two, and then he retraced his steps back down to the point of departure. Loening was waiting for him, and Harris returned shortly. They set off again back across the dusty flat to the bubble.

"It's a mess," Loening said. "The rocks vary in age from maybe a couple thousand years to God knows how old, and there are fifty different types. It doesn't tell us much." He ran his fingers through his dry brown hair, frowning.

"Our hop-friend told me they were mostly a couple of million years old," Michelson said. "At least in the area where I was."

"Yeah?" said Harris. "Did he say anything else?"

Michelson shook his head. "I asked him about the water, but he wouldn't answer me; he just shoved off and disappeared. You can't hold a conversation with someone who's liable to be gone at any moment. You get to stuttering."

"I never talked with a Marshie," Harris said. "They're telepathic, aren't they?—maybe they take one look into me and don't like me."

"Don't try to understand them," Loening said over his shoulder as he walked on ahead through the dust. "The only good thing about the damn Marshies is that they stay away from us most of the time."

"I don't know about that," said

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Michelson, and the three men fell silent, conserving their breath for walking.

But Michelson was thinking about the Marshie. Harris was right—they didn't usually talk with Earthmen. They would hop around and watch interestedly, and sometimes they would say a word or two, usually only enough to acknowledge your existence, but there was no communication between the two species. Yet this one was, comparatively, talking a blue streak. Why?

Michelson was becoming more and more sure that the Marshies had a settlement somewhere nearby. Back in the hills, probably—and Michelson was almost willing to bet that the water drainage ran right through those hills. It figured that the Marshies would settle somewhere where water was handy; on Mars that would be a prime requisite for the Marshies as well as the Earthmen. And if the Marshies were up in those hills, what did they think of the new Earth city being built right on the edge of the flat?

Maybe they hadn't decided yet.

The Marshies, come to think of it, knew a lot more about the Earthmen than they knew about the natives. The Marshies had stayed away from the Earth settlements, watching, and now the Earthmen were accidentally forcing a meeting between them; that must be shaking up the hoppers. And so, apparently, they were taking a final look at the Earthmen . . . and maybe soon they'd make a decision. He wished he knew what their alternatives were.

They took a landcar out the next day, loaded with a burndrill. The small red sun was still low over the horizon when they checked through the locks, and they threw a long gray shadow over the dust as they rode toward the hills. There had been no sign of the Marshie yet today, but Michelson was watching for the puffs of dust which would herald his arrival.

They set up the drill half a mile from the hills. It worked on the same principle as their blasters, boring a small hole straight down through the dirt and rock and, by the resistance offered, registering the various strata through which it passed. They found the water fifty feet down, under the layer of rock which formed the floor of the desert here.

They moved on to the base of the hills and again drilled, and again they found the water. Loening drew a straight line on a map of the area, and it passed directly from the building site through the two drilling-points. Extended, it would run through the mountains.

"We'll have to take the drill up into the hills," Loening said. "Flex your muscles—it's heavy."

They mounted it on rollers and made the ascent, and when they

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had got it to the first level spot in the pass they were all puffing with exertion despite the oxygen-masks they had donned. They sat and rested while Harris and Loening debated whether to drill here or try moving the drill further back into the hills. And the Marshie arrived.

He came down the pass in three quick hops and stopped next to the drill, which he regarded for a moment in his cocked-head stance. Then he skipped away and came back a few minutes later, landing next to Michelson.

"It is not a weapon," he said.

"No, it's a drill," Michelson said. "We're looking for water."

"Yes," said the Marshie, and hopped twenty feet back up the pass. There he stood motionless, looking at the Earthmen. Marshies could stand still for hours, completely unmoving, when they felt like it; only the Marshie's liquid-dark eyes moved, flicking from one to another of the Earthmen in turn, and continually back to rest on the drill which sat before them. Harris sat staring back at him, but Loening coldly ignored his gaze, looking almost sullenly down at his feet. Michelson rose and walked slowly toward the creature.

"We're trying to find the path of the water," he said. "Can you help us?"

The Marshie's head jerked to one side and the big, dark eye focussed on Michelson. After a moment he said, "I know where the water is."

"We want to dam the water, to keep it from our city," Michelson said. "If you help us, we can be sure we don't divert it from your own use."

The Marshie hopped to one side, paused, and hopped off up the slope out of sight. Michelson waited for several minutes, but he did not return. Michelson shrugged and went back to his companions.

"I think you've frightened him," Loening said. "They don't play our games."

"They haven't so far," Michelson admitted. "But I think they live in these hills, and they're going to have to take notice of that city we're building. It's about time we started cooperating with each other."

"Whether we like it or not?" said Loening.

Michelson nodded. "If that's their attitude—or ours. Personally, I think we might have a lot to offer each other; this could be the first step."

"The Marshies don't *step*," Loening said. "They hop. They skitter around like grasshoppers." His mouth was drawn back in a disgusted grimace. He took a breath and stood up. "Anyway, you can go on talking about cultural exchange with grasshoppers, but I think we'd better lug this drill up a bit further if we want to

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get anything concrete done today."

The three men began to attach the pulling-straps to their shoulders, but before they started their further ascent the Marshie came back. He landed beside them and said immediately, "I can tell you where the water is. You want to be friends."

Michelson dropped the strap and looked at the Marshie, wondering for a moment if the creature was serious. But of course it was useless to try to see what was in a hopper's mind, as Loening had said. At any rate, no matter how difficult it was to communicate with the Marshies, they did not lie.

He turned to Loening and said, "You and Harris take the drill back down to the landcar—the grasshoppers have landed."

He spent hours following the Marshie through the hills, back over five miles into the rocky, desolate terrain. There was silence in those mountains—not just the silence of a thin atmosphere, but the silence of emptiness, of desertion. The gray shadows fell along their path like dull pastel silhouettes, and the Marshie hopped back and forth past Michelson, silent but seemingly impatient. There was an air of excitement about this fur-covered creature—an almost childlike eagerness in his rough, inhuman voice when he occasionally stopped and said, "We will be friends, Walt, when I show you the water."

Well, of course he was interpreting the creature's attitude in his own terms, and it probably didn't make sense. But the Marshie hurried him along the rocky path.

They came down into a small hollow among the rocks, and the Marshie said, "Here is the water." There was an expanse of mud—the heavy brown dust of Mars, with water flowing slowly through it. It covered the floor of this tiny valley, and on its surface Michelson saw a thin green moss-like growth. It was like an expanse of quicksand, like an antiseptic swamp—for there were none of the heavier forms of vegation of Earth, no insects skimming the surface. Here amid the chill dark rocks of Mars was a branch of the annual drainage of the icecap, and it seemed pitifully anticlimactic to Michelson.

"You can stop the water here," said the Marshie. "We are friends?"

Michelson looked around him, across the muddy expanse at the hills which rose again immediately beyond. "Your home is back there?" he asked.

"Yes." The Marshie hopped once, twice, twenty feet at a time, and hopped back again. "We are friends?" he said again.

"Of course," Michelson said. And then a thought came to him

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and he said, "Do you know what friendship is?"

The Marshie's eye regarded him softly for a moment. "We know something of it. But we do not have a word for it."

Michelson was suddenly aware that this small, muddy valley was a strangely unimpressive scene for a meeting of races. He felt alone and unimportant standing amid the ages-old rocks of this world with the furry Martian. This was not, after all, his world; he had lived most of his life here, and had come to think of it as his home far more than he thought so of Earth, but here in the quiet gray rock-shadows he felt fully for the first time that this desolate world belonged to the hoppers—to the Martians. And without quite realizing what he was doing he cut in his oxygen supply, though he wasn't really short of breath.

The Marshie hopped away without a word, leaving him alone there.

Harris and Loening surveyed the area thoroughly in the days that followed, and Michelson sent some men out to begin construction of a dam there, meanwhile making preparations for draining the waterpocket beneath the city. It kept him busy for several days, and it wasn't until two weeks later, when the dam-construction was started, that he began to wonder seriously why the Marshie had not been around again. No one had seen him out at the dam site either.

Michelson took an aircar out to the site soon after and checked the progress of the work there. They had moved machinery in and set up temporary quarters there for the work-crew; the area was bustling with activity. Michelson looked at the footprints of the workmen in the Martian dust, heard the noise of the machines and the voices around him, and thought of that silent day when he had stood here alone with the Marshie. Two weeks ago . . . it seemed like months.

He left, and took the aircar up to scout the area. The Marshies' city was supposed to be somewhere further up the pass; he hoped he could spot it from the air. He flew low, droning through the massive rocky crags, watching the ground through binocs. He had penetrated fifteen miles further into the mountains and was almost ready to give up when he found it.

The dwellings were cut into the rock, in vertical lines up and down the cliffside. There were perhaps twenty or twenty-five of them; certainly no more. He landed the aircar at the base of those cliffs and approached slowly.

He needn't have bothered; they were empty. Some things had been left behind—a few small objects, delicately carved from stone, some

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pelts of the Marshies' own fur which had perhaps been used for added warmth during the winter, one or two pieces of what might have been furniture—but the area was definitely deserted. He couldn't tell offhand how long the Marshies had been gone, but he was sure it was no more than two weeks.

He left the dwellings untouched, not even picking up any of the small stone carvings to bring back with him. Perhaps later they could send out a government expedition to catalog and study what had been left. He walked slowly back to his aircar, looking at the depressions in the floor of the canyon left by the Marshies' footprints.

A fluttering behind him caused him to turn in surprise, and he saw a Marshie regarding him calmly. This could have been the same one, but he seemed a bit more heavily built, his fur somewhat darker.

"Hello," Michelson said. "We are friends?"

The Marshie continued to look silently at him for a moment, his heavy, dark wings folded like shadows around him. Then he said, "Some of us too are insane." And he disappeared with a quick jump and flutter of brown wings.

After awhile Michelson turned and continued walking to the aircar, leaving the footprints of his boots behind him in the dust.

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In which the Metric System is—with a few curious omissions —thoroughly explained by Our Contributing Science Editor. Left out, for some reason, was googogram *(used to measure the doting upon grandchildren by grandmothers),* overdue-poise *(needed in trying to collect delinquent debts),* nanny-gram *(for weighing goat's milk), and one or two others which lack of space precludes we should mention them. Personally, we are against the whole thing.*

PRE-FIXING IT UP

by Isaac Asimov

I GO THROUGH LIFE SUPPORTED AND BOLSTERED BY MANY COMforting myths, as do all of us. One of my own particularly cherished articles of faith is that there are no arguments against the metric system and that the common units make up an indefensible farrago of nonsense that we retain only out of stubborn folly.

Imagine the sobering effect, then, of having recently come across a letter by a British gentleman who bitterly denounced the metric system as being artificial, sterile and not geared to human needs. For instance, he said (and I don't quote exactly), if one wants to drink beer, a pint of beer is the thing. A liter of beer is too much and half-a-liter is too little, but a pint, ah, that's just right.*

As far as I can tell, the gentleman was serious in his provincialism, and in considering that that to which he is accustomed has the force of

* *Before you write to tell me that half-a-liter is larger than a pint, let me explain that though it is larger than an American pint, it is smaller than a British pint.*

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a natural law. It reminds me of the pious woman who set her face firmly against all foreign languages by holding up her Bible and saying, "If the King James Version was good enough for the Apostles, it's good enough for me."

But mainly, it reminds me that I want to write an article on the metric system. In order to do so, I want to begin by explaining that the value of the system does not lie in the actual size of the basic units. Its worth is this: that it is a logical *system*. The units are sensibly interrelated.

All other sets of measurements with which I am acquainted use separate names for each unit involving a particular type of quantity. In distance, we ourselves have miles, feet, inches, rods, furlongs, and so on. In volume, we have pecks, bushels, pints, drams. In weight, we have ounces, pounds, tons, grains. It is like the Eskimos who are supposed to have I don't know how many dozens of words for snow, a different word for it when it is falling or when it is lying there; when it is loose or packed; wet or dry; new-fallen or old-fallen and so on.

We ourselves see the advantage in using adjective-noun combinations. We then have the noun as a general term for all kinds of snow and the adjective describing the specific variety: wet-snow, dry-snow, hard-snow, soft-snow and so on. What's the advantage? First, we see a generalization we did not see before. Second, we can use the same adjectives for other nouns, so that we can have hard-rock, hard-bread, hard-heart and consequently see a new generalization, that of hardness.

The metric system is the only system of measurement which, to my knowledge, has advanced to this stage.

Begin with an arbitrary measure of length, the "meter" (from the Latin "metrum" or the Greek "metron", both meaning "to measure"). Leave that as the generic term for length so that all units of length are "meters." Differentiate one unit of length from another by means of an adjective. That, in my opinion, would be fixing it up right.

To be sure, the adjectives in the metric system, (lest they get lost by accident, I suppose) are firmly jointed to the generic word and thus become prefixes. (Yes, Gentle Reader, in doing this to the measurement system, they were "pre-fixing it up.")

The prefixes were obtained out of Greek and Latin in accordance with the following little table:

English	*Greek*	*Latin*
thousand	chilioi	mille
hundred	hekaton	centum
ten	deka	decem

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Now if we save the Greek for the large units and the Latin for the small ones we have:

1 kilometer*	equals	1,000	meters
1 hectometer	equals	100	meters
1 dekameter	equals	10	meters
1 meter	equals	1	meter
1 decimeter	equals	0.1	meter
1 centimeter	equals	0.01	meter
1 millimeter	equals	0.001	meter

It doesn't matter how long a meter is; all the other units of length are as defined. If you happen to know the length of the meter in terms of yards or of wavelengths of light or of two marks on a stick, you automatically know the lengths of all the other units. Furthermore, by having all the sub-units vary by powers of ten, it becomes very easy (given our decimal number system) to convert one into another. For instance, I can tell you right off that there are exactly one million millimeters in a kilometer. Now you tell me right off how many inches there are in a mile.

And again, once you have the prefixes memorized, they will do for *any* type of measurement. If you are told that a "poise" is a measure of viscosity, it doesn't matter how large a unit it is or how it is related to other sorts of units or even what, exactly, viscosity is. Without knowing anything at all about it, you still know that a "centipoise" is equal to a hundredth of a poise, that a "hectare" is a hundred ares, that a "decibel" is a tenth of a bel; and even that a "kilobuck" is equal to a thousand dollars.*

In one respect and, to my mind, in only one, were the French scientists who established the metric system in 1795 shortsighted. They did not go past the thousand mark in their prefix system.

Perhaps they felt that once a convenient basic unit was selected for some measurable quantity, then a sub-unit a thousand times larger would be the largest useful one, while a sub-unit a thousandth as large would be the smallest. Or perhaps they were influenced by the fact that there is no single word in Latin for any number higher than a thousand.

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* *The Greek "ch" has the guttural German "ch" sound. The French, who invented the metric system, have no such sound in their language and used "k" instead as the nearest approach. That is why "chilioi" becomes "kilo." Since we don't have the guttural "ch" either, this suits us fine.*

* *If anyone wants to write that a "millipede" is a thousandth of a "pede" and that one "centipede" equals ten "millipedes", by all means, do—but I won't listen.*

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(Words like "million" and "billion" were invented in the late middle ages and in early modern times, as I explained in LOVE THOSE ZEROES, [F & SF, February 1959].)

The later Greeks, to be sure, used "myrias" for ten thousand, so it is possible to say "myriameter" for ten thousand meters, but this is hardly ever used. People say "ten kilometers" instead.

The net result, then, is that the metric system as organized originally offers prefixes that cover only six orders of magnitude. The largest unit "kilo-" is one million (10^6) times as great as the smallest unit "milli-" and it is the exponent, 6, that marks the orders of magnitude.

Scientists could not, however, stand still for this. Six orders of magnitude may do for everyday life, but as the advance of instrumentation carried science into the very large and very small in almost every field of measurement, the system simply had to stretch.

Unofficial prefixes came into use for units above the "kilo-" and below the "milli-" and of course that meant the danger of nonconformity (which is a bad thing in scientific language). For instance what we call a "Bev" (billion electron-volts), the British call a "Gev" (giga-electron-volts).

In 1958, then, an extended set of prefixes, at intervals of three orders of magnitude, was agreed upon by the International Committee on Weights and Measures at Paris. Here they are, with a couple of the older ones thrown in for continuity:

Size	*Prefix*	*Greek root*
trillion (10^{12})	tera-	"teras" ("monster")
billion (10^9)	giga-	"gigas" ("giant")
millionth (10^6)	mega-	"megas" ("great")
thousand (10^3)	kilo-	
one (10^0)		
thousandth (10^{-3})	milli-	
millionth (10^{-6})	micro-	"mikros" ("small")
billionth (10^{-9})	nano-	"nanos" ("dwarf")
trillionths (10^{-12})	pico-	?

As you see, I don't know the source of "pico-" and rather than write to the Bureau of Standards which is the dull way of doing it, I prefer to put it up to the Gentle Readers. If any of you know where "pico-" comes from, I would love to be told.

Well, then, we have a "picometer" as a trillionth of a meter, a "nanogram" as a billionth of a gram, a "gigasecond" as a billion seconds and a

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"teradyne" as a trillion dynes. Since the largest unit, the "tera" is 10^{24} times the smallest unit, the "pico-", the metric system now stretches not merely over 6, but over a full 24 orders of magnitude.

Is this too much? Have we overdone it, perhaps? Well, let's see.

The metric unit of length is the "meter." I won't go into the story of how it was fixed at its precise length, but that precise length in terms of familiar units is 1.093611 yards or 39.37 inches.

A "kilometer," naturally, is a thousand times that, or 1,093.6 yards, which comes out to 0.62137 miles. We won't be far off, if we call a kilometer 5/8 of a mile. A mile is sometimes said to equal "twenty city blocks;" that is, the distance between, let us say, 59th Street and 79th Street in Manhattan. If so, a kilometer would represent 12½ city blocks, or the distance from half-way between 66th & 67th Street to 79th Street.

For a "megameter" we increase matters three orders of magnitude and it is equal to 621.37 miles. This is a convenient unit for planetary measurements. The air distance from Boston, Massachusetts to San Francisco, California is just about 4⅓ megameters. The diameter of the earth is 12¾ megameters and the circumference of the earth is about 40 megameters. And finally, the moon is 380 megameters from the earth.

Passing on to the "gigameter," we have a unit, 621,370 miles long and this comes in handy for the nearer portions of the Solar system. Venus at its closest is 42 gigameters away and Mars can approach us as closely as 58 gigameters. The Sun is 145 gigameters from the earth and Jupiter, at its closest, is 640 gigameters distant; at its furthest 930 gigameters away.

Finally, by stretching to the limit of the newly extended metric system, we have the "terameter" equal to 621,370,000 miles. This will allow us to embrace the entire Solar system. The extreme width of Pluto's orbit, for instance, is not quite 12 terameters.

The Solar system, however, is just a speck in the Galaxy. For measuring distances to the stars, the two most common units are the "light-year" and the "parsec" and both are outside the metric system. What's more, even the new extension of the system can't reach them. The light-year is the distance that light travels in one year. This is about 5,880,000,000,000 miles or 9,450 terameters. The parsec is the distance at which a star would appear to us to have a parallax of one second of arc (*par*allax-*sec*ond, get it) and that is equal to 3.26 light-years, or about 30,000 terameters.

Even these non-metric units err on the small side. If one were to

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draw a sphere about the Solar system with a radius of one parsec, not a single known star would be found within that sphere. The nearest stars, those of the Alpha Centauri system, are about 1.3 parsecs away. There are only 33 stars, out of a hundred billion or so in the Galaxy, closer to our Sun that four parsecs and of these only seven are visible to the naked eye.

There are many stars beyond this; far beyond this. The Galaxy as a whole has a diameter which is, at its longest, 30,000 parsecs. Of course, we might use the metric prefixes and say that the diameter of the Galaxy is 30 kiloparsecs.

But then the Galaxy is only a speck in the entire Universe. The nearest extra-galactic structures are the Magellanic Clouds which are 50 kiloparsecs away, while the nearest full-size galaxy to our own is Andromeda, which is 700 kiloparsecs away. And there are hundreds of billions of galaxies beyond at distance of many megaparsecs.

The farthest galaxies that have made out have distances estimated at about two billion parsecs, which would mean that the entire visible universe, as of now, has a diameter of about 4 gigaparsecs.

Suppose, now, we consider the units of length in the other direction —toward the very small.

A "micrometer" is a good unit of length for objects visible under the ordinary optical microscope. The body cells, for instance, average about 4 micrometers in diameter. (A micrometer is often called a "micron.")

Drop down to the "nanometer" (often called a "millimicron") and it can be conveniently used to measure the wavelengths of visible light. The wavelength of the longest red light is 760 nanometers, while that of the shortest violet light is 380 nanometers. Ultraviolet light has a range of wavelengths from 380 nanometers down to 1 nanometer.

Shrinking the metric system to its tiniest, we have the "picometer," or a trillionth of a meter. Individual atoms have diameters of from 100 to 600 picometers. And soft gamma rays have wavelengths of about 1 picometer.

The diameter of subatomic particles and the wavelengths of the hard gamma rays go well below the picometer level, however, reaching something like 0.001 picometers.

The full range of lengths encountered by present-day science, from the diameter of the known universe at one extreme, to the diameter of a subatomic particle at the other, covers a range of 41 orders of magnitude. In other words, it would take 10^{41} protons laid side by side to stretch across the known universe.

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What about mass?

The fundamental unit of mass in the metric system is the "gram," a word derived from the Greek "gramma" meaning a letter of the alphabet.* It is a small unit of weight, equivalent to 1/28.35 ounces. A "kilogram," or a thousand grams is equal to 2.205 pounds and a "megagram" is therefore equal to 2,205 pounds.

The megagram is almost equal to the long ton (2,240 pounds) in our own units, so it is sometimes called the "metric ton" or the "tonne." The latter gives it the French spelling, but doesn't do much in the way of differentiating the pronunciation, so I prefer "metric ton."

A gigagram is 1,000 metric tons and a teragram is 1,000,000 metric tons and this is large enough by commercial standards. These don't even begin, however, to scratch the surface, astronomically. Even a comparatively small body like the Moon has a mass equal to 73 trillion teragrams. The earth is 81 times more massive and has a mass of nearly 6 quadrillion teragrams. And the Sun, a merely average star, has a mass 330,000 times that of the earth.

Of course, we might use the Sun itself as a unit of weight. For instance the Galaxy has a total mass equal to 150,000,000,000 times that of the Sun, and we could therefore say that the mass of the Galaxy is equal to 150 gigasuns. Since it is also estimated that in the known universe there are *at least* 100,000,000,000 galaxies then, assuming ours to be of average mass, that would mean a minimum total mass of the universe equal to 15,000,000,000 terasuns or 100 gigagalaxies.

Suppose, now, we work in the other direction.

A "milligram" or a thousandth of a gram, represents a quantity of matter easily visible to the naked eye. A drop of water would weigh about 50 milligrams.

Drop to a "microgram," or a millionth of a gram, and we are in the microscopic range. An ameba would weigh in the neighborhood of five micrograms.

The cells of our body are considerably smaller and for them we drop down to the "nanogram" or a billionth of a gram. The average liver cell has a weight of about two nanograms.

Below the cells are the viruses, but even if we drop to the "picogram," a trillionth of a gram, we do not reach that realm. The tobacco mosaic virus, for instance, weighs only 0.000066 picograms.

Nor is that particularly near the bottom of the scale. There are molecules for smaller than the smallest virus, and the atoms that make up

* *The Greeks marked small weights with letters of the alphabet to indicate their weight, for they used letters to represent numbers, too.*

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the molecules and the particles that make up the atom. Consider the following table:

	Weight in picograms
hemoglobin molecule	0.0000001
uranium atom	0.0000000004
proton	0.00000000000166
electron	0.0000000000000009

All told, the range in mass from the electron to the minimum total mass of the known universe, covers 83 orders of magnitude. In other words, it would take 10^{83} electrons to make a heap as massive as the total known universe.

In some ways, time (the third of the types of measurement I am considering) possesses the most familiar units, because that is the one place where the metric system introduced no modification at all. We still have the second, the minute, the hour, the day, the year and so on. I suggested in ABOUT TIME (F & SF, April 1960) that metric units of time are possible, but there is no danger of such a suggestion ever being accepted.

This means, too, that the units of time are the only ones used by scientists that completely lack the prefix system. The result is that you cannot tell, off-hand, the number of seconds in a week or the number of minutes in a year or the number of days in fifteen years. Neither can scientists.

The fundamental unit of time is the second and we could, if we wish, build the metric prefixes on those as follows:

1 second	equals	1	second
1 kilosecond	equals	16⅔	minutes
1 megasecond	equals	11⅔	days
1 gigasecond	equals	32	years
1 terasecond	equals	32,000	years

It is sobering to think that I have lived only about 1¼ gigaseconds; that civilization has existed for at most about 250 gigaseconds; and that man-like creatures may not have existed for more than 18 teraseconds altogether. Still that doesn't make much of an inroad into geologic time and even less of an inroad into astronomic time.

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The Solar system has been in existence for about 150,000 teraseconds and may well remain in existence without major change for 500,000 additional teraseconds. The smaller the star, the more carefully it hoards its fuel supply and a red dwarf may last without undue change for as long as 3,000,000 teraseconds. As for the total age of the Universe, past and future, I say nothing. There is no way of estimating and the continuous-creation boys consider the lifetime to be eternal.

I have one suggestion to make for astronomic time, however, (a suggestion which I don't think is particularly original with me). The Sun, according to reasonable estimates, revolves about the Galactic center once every 200,000,000 years. This we could call a "Galactic Year" or, better, a "galyear." (An ugly word, but never mind!) One galyear is equal to 6,250 teraseconds. On the other hand a "picogalyear" is equal to 1 hour and 45 minutes.

If we stick to galyears then, the entire fossil record covers at most only 3 galyears; the total life of the Solar system thus far is only 25 galyears; and the total life of a red dwarf as a red dwarf is perhaps 500 galyears.

But now I've got to try the other direction, too, and see what happens for small units of time. Here at least there are no common units to confuse us. Scientists have therefore been able to use "millisecond" and "microsecond" freely, and now they can join to that "nanosecond" and "picosecond."

These small units of time aren't very useful in the macroscopic world. When a Gagarin or a Glenn circles the earth at 5 miles a second, he travels less than 9 yards in a millisecond and less than a third of an inch in microseconds. The earth itself, moving at a velocity of 18½ miles a second in its travels about the Sun, moves only a little over an inch in a microsecond.

In other words, at the microsecond level, ordinary motion is frozen out. However, the motion of light is more rapid than any ordinary motion, while the motion of some speeding subatomic particles is nearly as rapid as that of light. Therefore let's consider the small units of time in terms of light.

	Distance covered by light	
1 second	186,200	miles
1 millisecond	186	miles
1 microsecond	33	yards
1 nanosecond	1 1/6	inches
1 picosecond	1/1,000	inch

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Now you may think that at picosecond levels subatomic motion and even light-propagation is "frozen." After all, I had dismissed Earth's motion as "frozen" when it moved an inch. How much more so, then, when thousandths of an inch are in question.

However, there is a difference. The Earth, in moving an inch, moves 1/500,000,000 of its own diameter. A speeding subatomic particle moving at almost the speed of light for a distance of a thousandth of an inch moves 10,000,000,000 times its own diameter. To travel ten billion times its own diameter, the Earth would have to keep on going for 125,000 years. For Gagarin or Glenn to have travelled for ten billion times their own diameter, they would have had to stay in orbit a full month.

A subatomic particle travelling a thousandth of an inch is therefore anything but "frozen" and has time to make a fabulous number of collisions with other subatomic particle or to undergo internal changes. As an example neutral pions break down in a matter of 0.0001 picoseconds after formation.

What's more, the omega-meson breaks down in something like 0.0000000001 picoseconds or, roughly, the time it would take light to cross the diameter of an atomic nucleus and back.

The entire range of time then from the lifetime of an omega-meson to that of a red-dwarf star covers a range of 40 orders of magnitude. In other words, during the normal life of a red dwarf, some 10^{40} omega-mesons have time to come into existence and break down, one after the other.

To summarize, then, the measurable lengths cover a range of 41 orders of magnitude, the measurable masses 83 orders of magnitude and the measurable times 40 orders of magnitude. Clearly, then, we are not overdoing it in expanding the metric system from 6 to 24 orders of magnitude.

That leaves only one thing to be done. In this article I have done far more figuring than I ordinarily do and there is something about the miserable malevolence of the multiplication table and the slippery sin of the slide-rule that throws me for a loss everytime. Consequently, if you catch me in an error (or several—and I suppose you will), let me know, and I will construct an addendum in a future issue to be entitled "Post-Fixing It Up." (How sneaky can you get?)

Addendum in proof: *I understand that additional prefixes: "femto" for 10^{-15} and "atto" for 10^{-18} have been suggested. That would expand the metric system to 30 orders of magnitude.*

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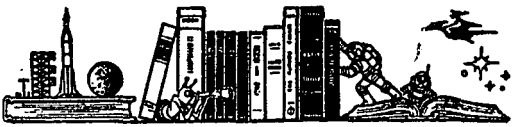

SOME WILL NOT DIE, Algis Budrys, Regency, 50¢

THE WAY OUT WORLD, Long John Nebel, Prentice-Hall, $3.95

ABOUT FIVE OR SIX YEARS AGO we read a book called FALSE NIGHT, by someone whose name was new to us. It impressed us, but we found it a lot less than satisfying. Damon Knight, lender of the book and friend of the author, attributed this to the text's having been butchered by the publisher —who shortly afterwards went out of business. Now, seven years later, all cuts restored, new material added, FALSE NIGHT is back as SOME WILL NOT DIE. It is, in brief—and hence, inadequate—description, an After-The-Great-Plague-Which-Wipes-Out-Civilization-As-We-Know-It story; elaborately worked out and carried through several generations of several characters and their descendents. It differs radically from other such stories in being principally concerned (indeed, almost obsessed) with military tactics and government. Here are no gaudy monarchies nor hordes quickly-reverted-to-the-barbarian, and seekers after flamboyant sex scenes will be disappointed.

The story begins with a group of free lance soldiers in an armored half-track, under contract to something called The Seventh North American Republic, whose agent seeks the legendary Theodore Berendtsen of the long-disbanded Army of Unification. Who was he? "A ghost walking the frontiers, contaminating the people with impatience, frightening children and politicians; a man who had put together the Second Free American Republic and taken hold after the plague had scoured the world clean of ninety percent of its people; a name promising armed men ordering things to suit a stranger, but carrying the memory of ten whole years of peace and a functioning civilization, with no further need for warning signs of NO FOOD—NO FUEL —NO WOMEN around the

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edges of the still struggling, still independent settlements"—a quasi-quote which we have cobbled together from the text.

The "six howling months of the plague" are seen only briefly, and in restrospect—after that, the long flash-back begins with a New York City where "civilization" has literally been reduced to a house-to-house basis. The Second Free American Republic has its genesis when Matt Garvin, its first president, and Gus Berendtsen (father of *the* Berendtsen) defeat a take-over attempt by the adjacent apartment building in the Stuyvesant Town housing estate. The next generation is concerned with extending SFAR government along the northeast Atlantic area —with emphasis naturally on city and rural area lines, rather than the rather artificial boundaries of the former states.

One can no more consider Budrys's writings without considering Lithuania than one can consider Conrad's without Poland: both men are exiles and over both has hovered the shadow of the Russias which, first in the 19th Century and then in the 20th crushed the native independence for which the fathers of both men had striven. If Budrys seems, as we have said, almost obsessed with military tactics and government, the explanation may lie (repeat, may) in his background. Then, again, it may not. There is always —to name but one—Caesar; and Budrys names him on the fourth page of the book. The book *could* have been written exactly as it was even if the author's father had not been one of the architects of the Republic of Lithuania and a prominent and controversial figure in its affairs between the World Wars (he is now Consul-General in New York of the Republic's government-in-exile; Budrys *fils* still holds its citizenship, and became—on paper, at least—a lieutenant in its army at the age of eleven). *Could* have been, we repeat, with repeated emphasis—but as it was not, it may be that what we see in it is not just theorizing, but the fruits of personal knowledge and experience.

In the generations-long fight which SOME WILL NOT DIE describes (and does not see more than the hope of the end of), there is an inevitable measure of self-seeking, as well as ignorant armies clashing by night. But there is more, and the two opposing theories of *government* (as distinct from mere *rule*) can be exemplified in two quotations. The first is from Robert Garvin, son of Mathew:

"We were born equal. We were born with a heritage of personal weapons to enforce our equality, and it is the personal weapons, in the hands of free men, which should assure that each man will not be trespassed against—that

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no one, ever, will be able to regiment, to demand, to tithe, to take from another man what is rightfully his. If we are each equally armed, what man is better than his neighbors? If we are all armed, who dares to be a thief, whether he steals liberty or possessions?

"And what is Ted Berendtsen's belief? That men should band together in a group for the purpose of forcing other men to serve that group . . ."

Berendtsen says: "I killed because some men would rather destroy than build—because their individual power was sweeter to them than the mutual liberty of all men. I killed, too, because I was born to a society, and men would not accept that society . . . I could do nothing else. Some issues are not clear cut. Whatever the evils of our society might have been . . . it was my firm conviction that it would have been intolerable to us had some outside way of life supplanted it . . . I burned as a weapon of war—a war not against individuals, but against what seemed to me to be darkness. I looted because I needed the equipment with which to kill and burn.

"I did these things in order to bring union to what had been scattered tribes and un-coordinated city-states. We stood on the bare brink of the jungle we had newly emerged from, and, left alone, it would have been centuries before the scattered principalities fought out such a bloody peace as would, at last, have given us civilization again—after it was too late, after the books had rotted and the machinery rusted.

"What binds an organization of people is unimportant. Political ideologies change. Purposes change. The rule of one man comes to an end. But the fact of organization continues, no matter what changes occur within that organization.

". . . I leave you an organization to do with as you will. I have set my hand upon today, but I have not presumed against tomorrow."

The book is not just talk, but is full of action, too.

Some years ago Jean Shepherd, who would be better known, perhaps, if he wrote more and talked less (only maybe not), took it in his head to urge his radio listeners to go out and buy Ivory Soap. This was purely in the nature of exercise for Shepherd: Ivory Soap was not one of his sponsors. Japes like this were not new for him, after all, he had once so successfully urged the faithful to buy a non-existent book called *I, Libertine,* by a non-existent "Frederic R. Ewing" that a publisher offered to bring it out if it were ever written: it then was, by Theodore Sturgeon, in 30 days, so legends tell. But this time nobody at the

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network laughed. Shep was Giving It Away For Love, he had to go.

His successor was an entrepreneur and former pitchman called Long John Nebel, who talked effortlessly from midnight to c. 5 a.m., with occasional breaks for Muzak-type music. In the early days of the show, when I first started listening, Nebel ambled on about the days when he was peddling fake foot-remedies to the yokels. Soon, somehow, before I knew it, the show had taken on its present well-known nature. Nebel, in his book, THE WAY OUT WORLD, doesn't say how; he just writes as he talks, easily—I find somewhat curious the omission of any mention of the program's development along these lines, but I may be making something out of nothing. "Today [he writes] we have a file of more than fifty 'panelists' who appear on the program from time to time. From this larger group about twenty come on fairly frequently. Six or eight of these are what I call my 'regular guys,' although one or two are women. ¶ Two or three 'panelists' appear with the guests on each program. Many are specialists chosen for a particular show because of specific talents, education, or interests. Several are very skilled in the art of extracting the inside story from a guest . . ."

"Although the program originally became famous because of the weird and off-beat people I had on, today the program covers every possible subject—bar none," he says. True enough, but the book devotes almost all of its space to the "weird and way out people" who made the show famous. If you are interested in discussions of such ninny-dizzards and Jacks of Eagles as flying saucer fans and UFO-ologists, some of whom show a keen ability to separate suckers from money, those in Contact with extra-terrestrials, inventors of kooky devices, Bridey Murphyites, spiritual "sensitives" (the term "medium" is rather old hat), practitioners of dianetics and scientology and orgone therapy and "Concept-Therapy" and "Humanetics" and "Nexology" and cetera; in Ray Palmer, a former editor of *Amazing Stories* and co-founder of the "Shaver Mystery," a rather disgusting and feeble-minded hoax; would-be trackers-down of *yeti*, the "Abominable Snowman;" psychic investigators and psychic phenomenators and fire-walkers and practicers of the Tantric mysteries—

No, come to think of it, these last two, though on the program, are not in the book.

I was once interested enough in and by the program to write a short story based on it; it was called *The Grantha Sighting*, and it was published here. Nebel read it and was amused by his portrayal as "Long Tom Knobel", and

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—through Lester Del Ray, program panelist, former Science Fiction and present science fact writer—invited me to visit the studio and look in on a program. I found him a pleasant and intelligent man, and had expected to be able to say the same of the book. Somehow, though, I am disappointed. The folksy style, acceptable to the ear, irritates the eye. The discussions, though mostly sceptical, are even more mostly shallow. The reader who is interested in the way out world (as good a term for it as any) and who has neither read nor heard very much about it, may find Nebel's review of the scene at least mildly interesting. To expect more than entertainment from Mr. Nebel, who is, after all, not a scholar, but a pitchman who made good, would perhaps be unfair.

I guess my main beef is that I am no longer entertained.

—Avram Davidson

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The comely Karen Anderson, wife to Poul and mother to Astrid, has just turned thirty and doesn't care who knows it. Her first professional appearance was here; with In Memoriam: Henry Kuttner (May, 1958), although she had been active in SF fandom for four years prior to that; and plays poker regularly with those two great men, Anthony Boucher and J. Francis McComas, the original editors of F&SF. Her first appearance here in prose tells a little-known chapter in the curious history of The Sphinx—that curious beast, part man and part lion; sometimes winged and sometimes not; and sometimes given to the asking of riddles. The habitat of The Sphinx was Greece and Egypt. The habitat of the Andersons is Orinda, California.

LANDSCAPE WITH SPHINXES

by Karen Anderson

THE PRIDE WAS A SMALL ONE, even as sphinxes go. An arrogant black mane blew back over Arctanax's shoulders and his beard fluttered against his chest. Ahead and a little below soared Murrhona and Selissa, carrying the remnants of the morning's kill. It was time the cubs were weaned.

The valley lifted smooth and broad from the river, then leaped suddenly in sandstone cliffs where the shadows seemed more solid than the thorny, gray-green scrub. A shimmer of heat ran along wind-scoured edges.

In the tawny rocks about the eyrie, the cubs played at stalk-the-unicorn. They were big-eyed, dappled, and only half fledged. Taph, the boy, crept stealthily up a sun-hot slab, peeking around it from time to time to be sure that the moly blossom still nodded on the other side. He reached the top and shifted his feet excitedly. That moly was about to be a dead unicorn. The tip of his tail twitched at the thought.

His sister Fiantha forgot the blossom at once. Pounce! and his tail was caught between her paws;

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he rolled back down on top of her, all claws out. They scuffled across baked clay to the edge of a thornbush and backed apart.

Taph was about to attack again when he saw the grownups dip down from above. He leaped across Fiantha and bounded toward the cave mouth. She came a jump and a half behind. They couldn't kiss Murrhona and Selissa because of the meat in their jaws, so they kissed Father twice instead.

"Easy, there! Easy!" Arctanax coughed, but he was grinning. "Get back into the cave, the two of you. How often do I have to tell you to stay in the cave?" The cubs laughed and bounced inside.

Selissa dropped the meat she had been carrying and settled down to wash her face, but Murrhona called her cubs over to eat. She watched critically as they experimented with their milk-teeth on this unfamiliar substance.

"Hold it down with your paw, Fiantha," she directed. "If you just tug at it, it'll follow you all over the floor. Like Taph—No, Taph, use your side teeth. They're the biggest and sharpest." And so the lesson went. After a while both cubs got tired of the game and nuzzled for milk.

Selissa licked her right paw carefully and polished the bridge of her broad nose. There was still a trace of blood smell; she licked and polished again.

"You can't rush them," she said rather smugly. "I remember *my* first litter. Time and again I thought they'd learned a taste for meat, but even when they could kill for themselves—only conies and such, but their own kill—they still came back to suck."

"Oh, I remember how put out you were when you realized you still had to hold quiet for nursing," Murrhona smiled lazily. She licked down a tuft behind Fiantha's ear and resettled her wings. "But I really hate to see them grow up. They're so cute with their little spots."

Selissa shrugged and polished the bridge of her nose again for good measure. If you wanted to call them *cute,* with their wings all pinfeathers and down shedding everywhere—! Well, yes, she had to admit they were, in a way. She licked her paw once more, meditatively, put her chin down on it and dozed off.

An hour later Fiantha woke up. Everybody was asleep. She stretched her wings, rolled onto her back, and reached her paws as far as she could. The sun outside was dazzling. She rubbed the back of her head against the cool sandstone floor and closed her eyes, intending to go back to sleep, but her left wing itched. When she licked at it, the itch kept moving around, and bits of down came loose on her tongue.

She rolled over on her stomach,

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spat out the fluff, and licked again. There—*that* did it!

Fully awake now, she noticed the tip of Arctanax's tail and pounced.

"Scram," he muttered without really waking. She pounced again just as the tail-tip flicked out of reach. Once more and she had it, chewing joyously.

"Scram, I said!" he repeated with a cuff in her general direction. She went on chewing, and added a few kicks. Arctanax rolled over and bumped into Selissa, who jumped and gave Fiantha a swat in case she needed it. Fiantha mewed with surprise. Murrhona sprang up, brushing Taph aside; he woke too and made a dash for Selissa's twitching tail.

"Can't a person get *any* rest around here?" grumbled Arctanax. He heaved himself up and walked a few feet away from his by now well-tangled family.

"They're just playful," Murrhona murmured.

"If this is play, I'd hate to see a fight," said Selissa under her breath. She patted Taph away and he tumbled enthusiastically into a chewing match with Fiantha.

"Go to sleep, children," Murrhona suggested, stretching out again. "It's much too hot for games."

Fiantha rolled obediently away from Taph, and found a good place to curl up, but she wasn't the least bit sleepy. She leaned her chin on a stone and looked out over the valley. Down there, in the brown-roasted grass, something moved toward a low stony ridge.

There were several of them, and they didn't walk like waterbuck or unicorn; it was a queer, bobbing gait. They came slowly up the ridge and out of the grass. Now she could see them better. They had heads like sphinxes, but with skimpy little manes, and no wings at all; and—and—

"Father, *look*!" she squeaked in amazement. "What kind of animal is that?"

He got up to see. "I don't know," he replied. "Never saw anything like it in all my born days. But then, we've had a lot of queer creatures wandering in since the glaciers melted."

"Is it game?" asked Taph.

"Might be," Arctanax said. "But I don't know any game that moves around in the middle of the day like that. It isn't natural."

"And the funny way they walk, too," added Fiantha.

"If they're silly enough to walk around like that at mid-day," Arctanax said as he padded back to an extra-cool corner of the cave, "I'm not surprised they go on two legs." ◄

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John Brunner (it should really be John K. H.—for Kilian Houston—Brunner, who is not to be confused with his cousin John H. K.—for Houston Kilian—Brunner) is a twenty-eight year old English author who first discovered Science Fiction via H. G. Wells at the age of eight—and a very good way to discover it, too. At age ten he began his first SF story, but never finished it, at thirteen collected his first rejection slip, and at the ripe age of seventeen he sold his first paperback novel. Since then he has been an RAF pilot officer, a technical abtractor, and a publisher's editor, and is "now writing (horse laugh) full time." Mr. Brunner adds, "I play guitar, recorder and other instruments rather badly. Am folknik. (That's a hell of a useful suffik—how did we manage without it?) Have been described as 'the most socially conscious of British science fiction writers.' Suits me." Part of Mr. Brunner's social consciousness takes the form of actively working for unilateral nuclear disarmament, to which is coupled—not unsurprisingly—as readers of this story will observe, a certain distrust of the American political scene. Twisting the eagle's tail has now replaced a similar game once played with the lion's caudal appendage. Warning: this story does not allow itself to be read easily. But it is one of the best stories of telepathy-from-the-inside that we have ever read.

PROTECT ME FROM MY FRIENDS

by John Brunner

MAYBE IF I KNEW HOW MUCH rock there is lying on top of me when I sleep I would worry about it but more likely knowing or not

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knowing try to push it out of the way within the rock me like a worm in an apple

in this volume 4000 cu ft loungeroom bedroom bathroom me like a rat in a trap

damn them all damn them all

especially the coming-down the passage ones the new and the known oh strain stain strain to SEE PAST THE BEND AND NO NOT THIS TIME BECAUSE TOO LATE BUT ON THE WAY OUT CLING LONGER AND SEE IN PRESENT TIME NOT MEMORY

IN PRESENT TIME SEE STONE FLOOR ROOF WALLS GREY OVERPAINTED PALE FRIENDLY COLOURS NOW THIS DOOR UNLOCK AND NEXT STRETCH IS RIGHT TURN LEFT TURN MAZE-LIKE BAFFLES

(what was that? about like going into a nuclear pile?)

SAME OLD GOD DAMNED PASSAGEWAY

people who the same? beardandspecs of course in charge like guide at zoo and silly sightsee important people with relations some congressional visitor wife and daughter young and OH SO FRESH AND RECENT IN THE MIND THE SIGHT OF SUN AND GRASS AND SOUND OF RUNNING WATER RAIN SMELL OF AIR FRESH IN OPEN COUNTRY torture with the lack of it

damn them all damn them all maybe with small reservation for bringing fresh memory

IN PRESENT TIME THE SAME GOD DAMNED PASSAGEWAY AND NOW THE PARTY CLOSE TO ME ONE MORE DOOR ONE MORE BEND AND THAT DOOR THE OTHER SIDE OF WHICH I NEVER SAW WITH OPEN EYES OF MINE BUT SAW THEN OFTEN AS NOW ONE TWO THREE FOUR TIMES AT ONCE AND THEN

myself seen (wad some guid the giftie gie us)

beardandspecs heard by me with my ears

him with his ears and
her with hers and me
her with hers and me } —saying

like a club sandwich, in many various layers

"Good morning Hank may I introduce Representative and Mrs Clowson and Miss Gaye Clowson"

(where *did* beardandspecs get that dual habit of seeing the words he speaks to spell them out before his inner eye?)

should I bother to answer? I'm a zoo exhibit and that's how Mrs Clowson rightly regards me

she's slightly myopic but vain of her puffy beauty and will not wear the glasses so she blurs me and says in a high wilfully charming voice

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"Good morning Mr Burrell it's a great pleasure to make the acquaintance of a truly unique person like yourself"

ha ha ha

and her husband fat and fifty-five next month the second embarrassed at the political chicanery he bears in his mind open to me like a book and seeking reassurance in the layer of rock dividing me from such mundane affairs as election rivalry and sun and rain and grass and

OH THE DARLING LITTLE ONE SHE KNOWS STILL YOUNG ENOUGH TO BE VOYAGING ON THE DISCOVERY OF THE WORLD WHAT? SEVENTEEN BUT NOT QUITE AND THINKING THAT GENEROUS PITY FOR THE FAMOUS EXHIBIT IN THE SAFEST VAULT ON EARTH

Gaye see me smile and smile back bless you for that pity

snuffle and Mrs. Clowson turn away

"Not exactly friendly is he?"

FRIENDLY TO YOU WHO BURY ME BENEATH A MOUNTAIN WITH A MAZE TO SHUT THE WORLD AWAY? I WOULD—

"I think anyone shut up like this has a right to be unfriendly"

"Gaye!"

"Oh it's not that bad Miss Clowson" smiling indulgent god damned beardandspecs the keeper explaining about how much longer the captive lion lives "as you see every provision is made for Hank's comfort an apartment many people in New York would envy and all the books the television radio piped down from the surface airconditioned even the windows as you see giving views that change with the weather on the surface the illusion is wellnigh perfect as you can see for yourself as you know moreover the situation demands it"

shudder inside a snug girdle dictated as to size by vanity like the absent glasses

"Is he reading my mind now?"

"He reads everyone's mind all the time you see he has no faculty to close off this extra sense he has"

but you O god damned beardandspecs with the indulgent smile have that faculty to close me off from fresh air sun and rain and grass and to make me make do with what bright memory in a young girl's mind seeps by your baffling stone your twisting corridors your easy swinging metal doors on their great hinges

land of the free and home of the brave

grave

buried alive

"I think it's inhuman to put him away down here like this for no fault of his own"

mutinous little face and that strange thing which happens only with the youngest the glowing

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view of this strange external self Hank Burrell I do not really look that way saintly and hard done by but oh how I *feel* that way

nervous shifting at the reminder of the mind's nakedness on the part of Clowson (representing what?) and beardandspecs on cue to suggest how great the strain is and relief by mrs and sorrow and all generous good wishes by miss

so for her the unusual and the shaken hand and the

yes she understood and clasped it

"That's a great honour Miss Clowson" indulgent smiling god damned beardandspecs "very rare for him to make any overt gesture of friendship"

"Not surprising the way he's treated!" hotly and with the hand (I feel it too through her of course) holding the note which as the others turn and go she'll read and act on it—?

I KNEW SHE WAS THE ONE! KNEW IT!

so fading down the corridor and distracted between following them in the ohsofaint hope that this time it will go all the way to the surface and the sun and the rain

but blocked off at the third turn of the passage as god damned usual

and touching that fresh sympathetic friendly liking for me and the will to help and the hatred of captivity that memory in distant childhood how the cage was opened and the bright canary taken to the free air at the window and later punishment but so deep a hating of the cage

(and something else? too far now and faint but something of the bird when freed among other birds? faint)

yet determination and persistence and—?

YES YES YES DONE AS ASKED ON THE HAND TO HAND PASSED SLIP LABORIOUSLY WRITTEN AND PROMISE OF FREEDOM

"Well it's hard to say" beardandspecs heard distantly in the hearers' minds half-comprehended "for there have been so many setbacks and of course when he was first discovered he was in a dreadful state"

beneath how many tons of living rock is better????

"gaining his confidence slowly I'd instance the way he took your daughter's hand by the way where is she?"

OH NO

NOT INTERFERENCE AT THIS MOMENT

"oh yes please keep up if you don't mind my dear as I was saying we hope eventually to"

and the rock between and the twisting passageway

snatches

"interrogate suspected spies/traitors/subversives invaluable but little progress blrrrrr"

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AND ONE LAST BRIGHT SHOUT CONCENTRATED BEHIND CLOSED EYES

"I did it to all of them *shame on him!*" and the picture of the yellow bird free of the cage

wait wait wait but oh desperation and then *now* after so long scheming and so much refusal and the door YES it opens and to SEE WITH OWN EYES IN PRESENT TIME BEYOND THE DOOR OH LIBERTY OH MIRACLE OH BLESS YOU GAYE WOULD SPEAK TO YOU BUT ALAS

how strange with own fingers actions felt second-hand by beardandspecs and the others often often OPEN DOOR OPEN DOOR run between can't help it *eager eager eager* somewhere is a mountain called Going-to-the-Sun and me in the mountain now free in the twisting passage for the catches on the locks she put back lagging behind thoughtful moody pretending

is this the mountain called Going-to-the-Sun?

NOW NEW THINGS SIGHTS PAST THE ENDING POINT WHERE BAFFLING WALLS BEFORE SHUT AWAY THE OTHER MINDS MORE CORRIDOR BUT NOT MUCH MORE AND BRIGHTER DO I SMELL FRESH AIR AND OH YES - YES AND THERE AN OPENING AND BEYOND IT SUN AND . . . ?

people?

yes but God so many and how LOUD and multiple and SCARED and "HE'S LOOSE HOW THE HELL WATCH IT DANGER FEAR" and here and there writ very small "poor devil" but PEOPLE . . . ?

forward concentrate see the sky the sun the rain the people people many minds at once calm control step so foot before foot much running (not in me I see my feet walk slow and steady and others run but which is others and which is me and?) run row to the light and the sky and smell fresh air and "WATCH OUT HE GOT LOOSE SOMEHOW FEAR DANGER" confusion

oh the sky of the sun oh the intolerable battering and pain of a thousand minds open and naked shouting a millionfold loud and one picture clear bright horror-filled the yellow freed bird set upon by city feathered drabs torn as a stranger to pieces by the savage beaks

god damn you Gaye

blank

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The usefulness of Musick in having Charms to sooth the Savage Beaste is well-known to Mr. R. (for Reginald) Bretnor, whose justly famous THE GNURRS COME FROM THE VOODVORK OUT (F&SF, Winter-Spring, 1950) is a classical treatment of the theme. That not just any old piece of music will do, however, is demonstrated by this Bretnor story and its cautionary title. Mr. B. lives in Berkeley (California) and raises Siamese cats—but what songs he plays for them, while perhaps not beyond conjecture, are alas unknown to us.

YOU HAVE TO KNOW THE TUNE

by R. Bretnor

DURING THE FIRST TWO HOURS of the flight—before the starboard engine suffered its initial paroxysm of coughing and sputtering—Murchison exhibited no more than his ordinary ill-temper. He sat there arrogantly, ordering the destiny of public funds and political retainers, dictating in a large voice to his sharp-nosed secretary, Miss Tandish.

Murchison certainly would never have admitted, even to his conscience, that she was not the object of his monologue, and that he actually was addressing the only other passenger, an old gentleman in shabby black who occupied a seat half-way up the long cabin.

Looking the old man over, Murchison had decided that he was a missionary. The untidy aureole of white hair, the hatchet jaw and strangely puckered mouth, the too-protuberant blue eyes—all these had classified him instantly. And Murchison hated missionaries; they were busybodies, troublemakers, with queer ideas of how natives should be treated. He longed for a chance to tell the old man off, to put him in his place.

But the old man would not cooperate. He made no effort to scrape up an acquaintance, and his indifference to Murchison's ostentatious talk of great affairs was almost offensive. Not even

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the most scandalous and secret matters could tempt his interest; he ignored them entirely—and this, naturally, meant that he was ignoring Murchison, who did not fancy being ignored.

By the time the engine went into its tantrum, Murchison's annoyance was becoming obvious; and his subsequent apprehension did nothing to improve his disposition. As they rapidly lost altitude, he became unpleasantly aware of the vast, unpenetrated plains below them, of the tall grass and the thorn trees, of the creatures living there. He suddenly realized that the heart of Africa was no place for a forced landing. He broke off his dictation; he cursed the plane, and Miss Tandish, and the steward who came foward to tell him nervously that there was no danger. Then, as the engine seemed to resume its normal tempo, he gathered himself together.

"Well?" he snapped at his secretary. "What else is there?"

Miss Tandish tried to straighten her lank black hair with a shaking hand. She started to stutter.

"Speak up, blast it!" snarled Murchison.

"There . . . there's that business of the lions. The . . . the lions around M'Busu."

"I thought I made that clear." Murchison's voice became even more unpleasant. "Didn't I order them exterminated?"

"There's a note here that they're a tourist attraction," suggested his secretary doubtfully.

Murchison crashed a fist into a broad, moist palm. "Kill them all!" he bellowed. "Kill every goddamned lion within forty miles of M'Busu!"

And it was then that the old man spoke. He spoke very clearly, in a tense, cracked voice. "You can't do *that!*" he said.

Slowly, Murchison raised his head. His jowls started to turn purple. "And why in hell can't I?" he asked ominously.

The old man had turned around. He was gripping the back of his chair with distressed fingers. "Oh, but you *mustn't,*" he said. "Really you mustn't! I *like* lions!"

Under more normal circumstances, Murchison would have ended the conversation there and then with a roar of brow-beating invective. But fear had turned his anger to a more subtle pitch. He restrained his first impulse. Instead of exploding, he only snorted, "So you *like* lions, do you? Well, M'Busu's been a refuge long enough. Now we're going to clean the vermin out. Understand?"

"Lions aren't vermin!" cried the old man indignantly. "You don't know anything about them! They aren't just commmon animals. They're very sensitive. They love music."

"He's insane!" said Miss Tandish, in a loud whisper. *"He's . . ."*

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Murchison silenced her with a grunt—but, in a shadowy corner of his mind, an idea started to evolve, one of those very practical ideas which had done so much to push him along in his career . . . A missionary. A batty missionary. Probably crazy enough for anything, if you played him right. *Mad Missionary Attacks Commissioner Murchison.* Political capital could be made of a story like that.

"You're off your nut!" said Murchison brutally.

"I'm not!" shrilled the old man, wild-eyed. "Lions do love music! They love the bassoon. Especially the bassoon." He paused for an instant. He smiled at Murchison. "Of course," he said, "You have to know the tune. The right tune."

"And you're the lad who knows it, eh?" sneered Murchison. "How do you work it? Three shows a day, with the cubs in free?"

The old man's eyes narrowed, and the tip of his tongue flicked at his lips as he shook his head. "No, no, no," he said. "It isn't me. It was a friend . . . a friend of mine." . . . He stood abruptly. He stepped into the aisle. "I'll tell you about it!" he exclaimed. "Then you'll understand. I'll tell you about Varksfontein!"

"Varksfontein?" said Murchison. "I've lived in Africa thirty years. Never heard of it."

"Neither have I," put in Miss Tandish loyally.

"It was a long time ago," said the man in black. "In the old days. He—my friend—went there. He was a great artist. He owned a beautiful bassoon. But nobody wanted to hear him play it. They only wanted bassoons in orchestras, drowned in horrid noises. He came to Varksfontein, and he worked in a shop, and at night he'd play all alone, wonderfully, simply wonderfully!"

The old man came a step nearer. "But the people hated him. Philistines! Barbarians! They made him leave his boarding house. They made him live in a hut on the edge of town. Finally . . ." His voice cracked and wavered. "Finally they came at night, and took him and threw him in the river. They would have broken his bassoon—but he'd hidden it!"

"More's the pity!" said Murchison.

The old man seemed not to hear. "After that, he went out in the veldt to play. What splendid music! What a beautiful bassoon! And one evening—one evening he found out about the lions! He heard them. They were purring. They were in a circle all around him, purring and stretching their claws in and out, and watching him with their golden eyes. When he played the tune, they followed him, and waited to hear it again. And every night he'd come and play it to them. And then he'd finish off with 'God Save The King', and they'd go away."

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The old man wrung his hands frantically. "He was so happy! But the people still hated him. Sometimes, late at night when they were asleep and couldn't hear, he played just a little while in his hut. So they said they'd kill him if he didn't go away."

Now a scant yard from Murchison, the old man chuckled softly to himself. "Yes," he said, "my poor friend went away. He left Varksfontein. Oh, yes—but not for long! He went out into the veldt a long way, and he started walking. He walked for miles and miles, playing the tune, walking in circles, closer and closer to the town. And the lions came—the lions, and the lionesses, and the dear little cubs—and they followed him in, hundreds of them! He went to live in the mayor's house, and he played to them through the window. He stayed for days and days, playing to them. And when he stopped, they waited for him to play again. For days and days . . ."

Murchison's patience was wearing thin, but he held himself in check.

"The people didn't like it," the old man went on. "They tried to shoot the lions, but they only hit a few. The streets were full of lions, waiting for that lovely music, for the bassoon. The people couldn't even go outside for things to eat. Oh, they were angry, I can tell you!"

Miss Tandish, who had been taking the conversation down in shorthand, looked up from her notebook. "How absurd!" she declared. "Why, the lions would've had to eat too, wouldn't they?"

The old man's voice dropped a full octave. "That," he said, laughing a most peculiar laugh, "is why you have never heard of the town of Varksfontein."

Murchison pushed himself to his feet. He thrust his jaw into the old man's face. "You lunatic!" he bawled. "You and your bloody lions and bassoons! Another word, and I'll have you in a madhouse when we land, so help me! D'you think . . ."

Murchison broke off sharply—again the engine had skipped a beat. For a long moment they stood there, uttering not a word. Then, "Do you think you're going to keep me from having those lions done away with?" shouted Muchison.

The old man gave no ground. "But you *mustn't!*" he screamed. "You just don't understand!"

The engine coughed; it coughed again. A heavy tremor ran through the entire craft. There was a harsh fusillade of backfiring. And there was, quite suddenly, one engine only—and a black thread of smoke streaming back to starboard . . . The voice of the old man rose in the plane, screaming *"You can't! You can't!"* over and over. He was still screaming it when the

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steward and the co-pilot came, tense with emergency, shouting rapid orders.

The plane came down on the only really clear spot in sight, making an excellent forced landing, as such things go. It hit and bounced; hit with a sickening jar, and bounced again; slowed drunkenly and veered into its last lurching run. Finally it stopped, its landing-gear crumpled under it, but otherwise intact.

Though black smoke billowed from the starboard engine, the fire did not spread immediately. For minutes, the pilots fought it with extinguishers, holding it in check while the passengers escaped, while the luggage was dragged off out of harm's way. For a moment or two, even Murchison came to lend a hand, offering his advice until a bright burst of flame signalled the final dash to safety.

They watched the plane explode as the tanks ignited. They ex-extinguished the small fires that started in the grass near the smouldering skeleton. Then, singed and bruised and shaken, they gathered into a tight little circle around the luggage—as though nearness to each other could somehow shrink the immensity of their suddenly-realized isolation. They stood motionless, staring vacantly, saying nothing.

It was Miss Tandish who broke that frightened hush. "I was just thinking," she gabbled irrationally. "My aunt—I think that I once heard her mention it. That town—that Varksfontein."

Murchison was reminded of the old man in black, and he looked around savagely. "Where is that old fool?" he snarled.

But the old man was nowhere to be seen.

"We'd best get busy," said the pilot. "May be a week before they find us."

"Didn't you hear me?" bellowed Murchison. "Where's that blasted crazy missionary?"

"The old boy in black?" said the steward, who was sitting on a suitcase, holding his handkerchief to a bleeding forehead. "'E must've picked up 'is stuff while we got after that bloomin' fire. I saw 'im out of the corner of my h'eye, 'eading off into the scrub. Like as not, 'e was loony—as you say, sir. But 'e wasn't no missionary. Dear me, no. A missionary would've 'ad at least a bag or two. All 'e 'ad . . . "

The steward paused momentarily to readjust his makeshift dressing.

". . . was a bit of a knapsack and a musical h'instrument." ◀

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The second, and final, part of Robert Sheckley's new novel. The author's synopsis will smoothly carry the uninitiated into the Swing of Things.

THE JOURNEY OF JOENES

by ROBERT SHECKLEY

(Conclusion)

SYNOPSIS: *Five storytellers have related the tales of the far-travelling Joenes, a culture-hero of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Nearly a thousand years ago, Joenes left his island of Manituatua in the South Pacific and journeyed to the strange land of America. There he met Lum, an extremely hip young man, who introduced him to the pleasures of peyote; and he also met the beautiful Deirdre Feinstein.*

The San Francisco police arrested Deirdre for public intoxication, and when Joenes intervened, they arrested him, too. Swiftly Joenes was taken before a congressional committee, which found his activities subversive and suspicious, and bound him over to the Attorney-General for punitive measures.

The Attorney-General wished to have Joenes tried by the dreaded Star Chamber. But he compromised, sending Joenes to the Oracle at Sperry for judgment.

The Sperry Oracle, speaking its own mathematical tongue, gave Joenes a ten-year suspended sentence. Joenes left at once for New York. Here he met a man named Watts, as in Watts the matter? Watts explained that the crowds hurrying by on the streets were composed mainly of the walking dead. He began to define this concept, but was forced to depart hastily when a policeman came up.

The policeman told Joenes that Watts was a notorious jewel thief, and therefore not to be trusted. In speaking of his distaste for Watts, the policeman became inflamed with the compulsive need to draw his revolver and enforce the law. Joenes escaped the wrath of this man and hitchhiked to the north.

He was given a ride by three truckdrivers, who listened to his story and hold him theirs. Each of the truckdrivers had lost the thing most precious to him. One had lost his faith in science, another his faith in justice, and the third his faith in religion. Each man's story told the circumstances under

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which he had lost his faith, and each man revealed how he was slowly acquiring a new faith.

Joenes had no time to ponder these stories. When he left the truck, he saw a man waving to him. He approached, and found that it was his old friend Lum, welcoming him to the Hollis Home for the Criminally Insane.

Entering this place, Joenes learned that it was actually an artists and writers colony; a few madmen were kept chained in the cellar in order for the Home to maintain its tax-free status. A Doctor Broign explained some of the therapeutic techniques used. Joenes wanted to see one patient who believed himself to be God; but the deluded madman had vanished from a locked cell before Joenes had a chance for an interview.

The beautiful Deirdre Feinstein was also at the Hollis Home. She greeted Joenes with great warmth, and with plans for marriage in two days' time. For various reasons, Joenes found the projected alliance unpromising; therefore he prevailed upon Lum to help him leave the Hollis Home.

Lum did this, finding Joenes an instructor's position at the University of Stephen's Wood in Newark, New Jersey. Joenes went there gladly, but found an immediate difficulty in not knowing what subject he was supposed to teach. After he found this out, he enjoyed his work. His fullest acceptance came when several professors invited him to see the utopia they had created at Chorowait Mountain in the Adirondacks.

At first, Joenes found Chorowait a pleasantly pastoral retreat. He was somewhat surprised when a young woman came to share his bed, but he was told that this was customary. Joenes accepted this with good grace; but before he was settled down for the night, he heard a great roar. This, the young woman told him, was the cry of the Beast of Chorowait.

Joenes had heard of this creature, but had believed it to be a myth. The young woman told him that there were no myths on Chorowait; the Beast was as real as a chipmunk, and tonight it had come to kill.

Joenes could not doubt her word, for in the next moment, an enormous body crashed against the wall of his cabin. And a moment later, he found himself staring into the face of the Beast.

9b. THE BEAST OF THE UTOPIA

THIS CREATURE WAS LIKE nothing that Joenes had ever seen. In front it resembled a tiger, except that its massive head was black rather than tawny-striped. In the middle it was reminiscent of a bird, for rudimentary wings grew just below its shoulders. In

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back it was like a snake, possessing a tail which was twice as long as the Beast itself, as thick in its thickest part as a man's thigh, and scaled and barbed all over.

All of this Joenes saw in an instant, so strongly did the Beast impress itself upon his senses. When the Beast crouched to spring, Joenes scooped the fainting Laka in his arms and fled from the cabin. The Beast did not follow at once, but amused itself with a few minutes of wanton destruction before giving chase.

Joenes was able to join a group of village hunters. These men, with Lunu at their head, stood with spears and arrows poised, ready to engage in battle against the Beast.

Standing nearby was the village witch doctor and his two assistants. The witch doctor's wrinkled old face was painted ochre and blue. In his right hand he held a skull, and with his left hand he poked frantically through a pile of magical ingredients. At the same time he was cursing his assistants.

"Idiots!" he was saying. "Criminally incompetent fools! Where is the moss from the dead man's head?"

"It is under your left foot, sir," one of the assistants said.

"What a place for it!" the witch doctor said. "Give it here. Now where is the red shroud string?"

"In your pouch, sir," the other assistant said.

The witch doctor drew it out and threaded it through the eye sockets of the skull. He bound the moss in the nose-opening, then turned to his assistants.

"You, Huang, I sent to read the stars; and you, Pollito, I sent to learn the message of the sacred golden deer. Tell me quickly and without delay what these messages were and what the gods request in order for us to stop the Beast tonight."

Huang said, "The stars told us to bind rosemary widdershins tonight."

The witch doctor seized a sprig of rosemary from his pile of ingredients and bound it to the skull with a shroud string, turning the string three times with the sun.

Pollito said, "The message of the sacred golden deer was to give the skull a pinch of snuff; that he said would be enough."

"Spare me your moronic rhyming," the witch doctor said, "and give me the snuff."

"I don't have it, sir."

"Then where is it?"

"Earlier you said that you had obtained the snuff and put it in a safe place."

"Naturally. But in *which* safe place did I put it?" the witch doctor asked, rummaging wildly through his ingredients.

"Perhaps it's at the Underworld Altar," Huang said.

"Maybe it's buried at the Divining Place," Pollito said.

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"No, none of those places seem right," the witch doctor said. "Let me think . . ."

The Beast, however, gave him no further time for thought. It trotted out of Joenes's cabin and sprang at the line of hunters. A dozen arrows and spears darted forward to meet its charge, humming in the air like angry hornets. But these weapons had no effect. Unharmed, the Beast burst through the hunters' line. Already the witch doctor and his assistants had gathered up their ingredients and sprinted into the forest. The hunters also ran, but Lunu and two others were killed.

Joenes followed the hunters, and fear lent speed to his feet. At last he came to a clearing in the forest with a weathered stone altar in its center. Here was the witch doctor and his assistants, and behind them shuddered the hunters. In the forest, the howls of the Beast were growing louder.

The witch doctor was fumbling on the ground near the altar, saying, "I'm almost positive I put the snuff around here somewhere. I came here to ask the Sun's special blessing on it this afternoon. Pollito, do you remember what I did then?"

"I wasn't here," Pollito said. "You told us you were going to perform a secret rite, and that our presence was forbidden."

"Of course it was forbidden," the witch doctor said, digging vigorously around the altar with a stick. "But didn't you spy on me?"

"We would never do that," Huang said.

"Damned conformistic young morons!" the witch doctor said. "How do you expect to become witch doctors if you don't spy on me at every opportunity?"

The Beast appeared at the edge of the clearing, not fifty yards from the group. At the same moment the witch doctor bent down, then straightened with a small deerskin bag in his hand.

"Here it is, of course!" the witch doctor cried. "Right under the sacred ear of corn where I buried it this afternoon. Will one of you thumb-fingered imbeciles hand me another shroud string?"

Already Pollito was holding it out. With great dexterity, the witch doctor bound the bag to the skull's lower jaw, winding three times widdershins. Then he hefted the skull in his hand and said, "Is there anything I've forgotten? I don't think so. Now watch, you dull-witted bucolics, and see how the deed is done."

The witch doctor advanced on the Beast, holding the skull in both hands. Joenes, the hunters, and the two assistants, watched open-mouthed as the Beast pawed the earth into a trench three feet deep, stepped across it and moved ominously toward the witch doctor.

The old man stepped close with-

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out a sign of fear. At the last moment he threw the skull, striking the Beast on the chest. It seemed a puny blow to Joenes; but the Beast let out an immense roar of pain, turned and loped away into the forest.

The hunters were too weary to celebrate the Beast's defeat. They went silently to their cabins.

The witch doctor left, saying to his assistants, "I hope you've had the sense to learn something from this. When skull exorcism is called for, the prepared skull, or *aharbitus,* must strike the center of the Beast's chest. No other blow will do, but will simply augment the fury of the creature. Tomorrow we will study three-bodies exorcism, for which there is a very pretty ritual."

Joenes lifted the still-unconscious Laka and brought her back to his own cabin. As soon as the door was closed, Laka came to her senses and showered Joenes with kisses. Joenes pushed her away, telling her not to do violence to her feelings, nor to arouse his. But Laka declared that she was a changed woman, even if the change were only temporary. The sight of the Beast, she said, and of Joenes's bravery in rescuing her from it, had moved her to the depths of her being. Also, poor Lunu's death had shown her the value of passion in an ephemeral existence.

Joenes had his suspicions about these reasons, but there was no denying the fact that Laka had changed. Her eyes gleamed, and with a sudden leap reminiscent of the Beast's spring, she fell upon Joenes and toppled him onto the bed of pine boughs.

Joenes decided that as little as he knew of men, he knew even less of women. Also, the pine boughs hurt his back abominably. But soon he forgot his pain and his lack of knowledge. Both became exceedingly unimportant, and he did not think about them again until dawn had flooded the cabin with light, and Laka had slipped away and returned to her own cabin.

9c. THE NECESSITY FOR THE BEAST OF THE UTOPIA

In the morning, Joenes met with his colleagues from the University. He told them his adventures of the previous night and expressed indignation at not being warned about the Beast.

"But my dear Joenes!" said Professor Hanley. "We wanted you to witness this vital facet of Chorowait for yourself, and to judge it without preconceptions."

"Even if that witnessing had cost me my life?" Joenes asked angrily.

"You were never in the slightest danger," Professor Chandler told him. "The Beast never attacks any-

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one connected with the University."

"It certainly seemed as though it was trying to kill me," Joenes said.

"I'm sure it *seemed* that way," Manisfree said. "But actually, it was merely trying to get at Laka, who, being a Chorowaitian, is a suitable victim for the Beast. You might have been jostled a bit when the Beast tore the girl from your arms; but that is the worst that could have happened to you."

Joenes now felt chagrined at finding that his danger, which had seemed so dire last night, was now revealed as no danger at all. To conceal his annoyance, he asked, "What sort of creature was it and to what species does it belong?"

Geoffrard of Classics cleared his throat importantly and said, "The Beast you saw last night is unique, and should not be confused with the Questing Beast whom Sir Pellinore pursued, nor with the Beasts of Revelation. The Chorowaitian Beast is more closely akin to the Opinicus, which the ancients tell us was part camel, part dragon, and part lion, though we do not know in what proportions. But even this kinship is superficial. As I said, our Beast is unique."

Joenes asked, "Where did this Beast come from?"

The professors looked at each other and giggled like embarrassed schoolboys. Then Blake of Physics controlled his mirth and said to Joenes, "The fact of the matter is, we ourselves gave birth to the Beast. We constructed it part by part and member by member, using the Chemistry Lab on weekends and evenings. All departments of the University cooperated in the design and fabrication of the Beast, but I should especially single out the contributions made by Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Cybernetics, Medicine, and Psychology. And I must also mention the signal contributions of Anthropology and Classics, whose inspiration this was. Special thanks is due Professor Elling of Practical Arts who upholstered the entire Beast with the most durable of plastic skins. Nor should I forget Miss Hua, our student assistant, without whose careful collation of our notes the whole venture might have foundered."

The professors beamed happily at Blake's speech. Joenes, who had unwrapped a mystery only to find an enigma, still understood nothing. He said, "The construction of the Beast must have been very difficult."

"Indeed it was," said Ptolemy of Mathematics. "Excluding our own time, and the wear and tear on the Chem Lab, we had to spend twelve million four hundred thousand twelve dollars and sixty-three cents on the fabrication of special parts. Hoggshead of Accounting kept a careful record of all ex-

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penses in case we should ever be asked."

"Where did the money come from?" Joenes asked.

"The government, of course," said Harris of Political Science. "I, and my colleague Finfitter of Economics took over the problem of funds appropriation. We had enough left over to throw a victory banquet when Project Beast was completed. Too bad you weren't here for that, Joenes."

Harris forestalled Joenes's next question by adding, "Of course, we did not tell the government that we were building the Beast. Although they might still have granted funds, the inevitable bureaucratic delay would have been maddening. Instead, we said that we were working on a crash project to determine the feasibility of building an eight-lane coast to coast underground highway in the interests of national defense. Perhaps I do not need to add that Congress, which has always favored highway construction, voted immediately and enthusiastically to give us funds."

Blake said, "Many of us felt that such a highway would be eminently practical, and perhaps extremely necessary. The more we thought about it, the more the idea grew on us. But the Beast came first. And even with government funds at our disposal, the task was tremendously difficult."

"Do you remember," asked Ptolemy, "the excruciating problems of programming the Beast's computer brain?"

"Lord yes!" Manisfree chuckled. "And what about the difficulties of giving it a parthenogenetic reproductive system?"

"Almost had us stopped," said Dalton. "But then, consider how we worked to coordinate and stabilize the Beast's movements! The poor thing lurched around the lab for weeks before we got that right."

"It killed old Duglaston of Neurology," Ptolemy said sadly.

"Accidents will happen," Dalton said. "I'm glad we were able to tell Administration that Duglaston had gone on his sabbatical."

The professors seemed to have a thousand anecdotes about the building of the Beast. But Joenes impatiently broke into their reminiscences.

"What I wanted to know," Joenes said, "is *why* you built the Beast?"

Blake said, "The Beast was necessary, Joenes. It or something exactly like it was needed for the success of Utopian Chorowait, and by extension, for the fulfillment of the future which Chorowait represents. The Beast, you see, is the implicit necessity upon which Chorowait rests.

"The Beast, my dear Joenes, is nothing less than Necessity personified. Today, with all mountains climbed and all oceans plumbed, with the planets within

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reach and the stars much too far away, with the gods gone and the state dissolving, what is there left? Man must pit his strength against something; we have provided the Beast for him. No longer must man dwell alone; the Beast is forever lurking nearby. No longer can man turn against himself in his idleness; he must be forever alert against the depredations of the Beast."

Manisfree said, "The Beast makes Chorowait society stable and cohesive. If the people did not work together, the Beast would kill them one by one. Only by the efforts of the entire populace of Chorowait is the Beast kept in reasonable check."

"It gives them a healthy respect for religion," Dalton said. One needs religion when the Beast is on the prowl."

"It destroys complacency," Blake said. "No one could be complacent in the face of the Beast."

"Because of the Beast," Manisfree said, "the community of Chorowait is happy, family-oriented, religious, close to the soil, and continually aware of the necessity for virtue."

Joenes asked, "What stops the Beast from simply destroying the entire community?"

"Programming," Dalton said.

"I beg your pardon?"

"The Beast has been programmed, which is to say, certain information and responses have been built into its artificial brain. Needless to add, we took a great deal of care over that."

"You taught the Beast not to kill University professors," Joenes said.

"Well, yes," Dalton answered. "We aren't too proud of that, to tell you the truth. But we thought we might be necessary for a while."

"How else is the Beast programmed?" Joenes asked.

"It is taught to seek out and destroy any ruler or ruling group of Chorowait people; next in priority to destroy the unvirtuous, and next to destroy any Chorowaitian. Because of that, any ruler must protect both himself and his people from the Beast. That in itself is quite enough to keep him out of mischief. But the ruler must also cooperate with the priesthood, without whose aid he is helpless. This serves as a decisive check on his powers."

"We took great care to preserve the separation between church and state," Harris said. "There is no single combination, you see, which will serve for all times. Instead, there is a vast quantity of formulae which must be calculated each day, using lunar and stellar cycles, and variables such as temperature, humidity, wind speed, and the like."

"These calculations must keep the priests very busy," Joenes said.

"Indeed they do," Hanley said. "So busy that they have very little

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time in which to interfere with the affairs of the state. As a final safeguard against the possibility of a rich, complacent, and overweening priesthood, we have programmed a recurring random factor into the Beast. Against this nothing suffices, and the Beast will kill the witch doctor and no other. In that way, the witch doctor runs the same danger as does the ruler."

"You can see the interlocking nature of all this," Blake said. "Both the ruler and the witch doctor maintain their positions only through the support of the people. An unpopular ruler would have no men to help him against the Beast, and would quickly be killed. An unpopular witch doctor would not receive the vital substances which he needs in order to check the Beast, and which must be gathered by the efforts of the entire people. Thus, both the ruler and the witch doctor hold power by popular consent and approval, and the Beast thus institutes a genuine democracy."

"There are some interesting sidelights on all this," Hanley of Anthropology said. "I believe this is the first time in recorded history that the full range of magical artifacts has been objectively necessary for existence. And it is probably the first time there has ever been a creature on Earth which partook so closely of the supernatural. It's complicated, of course, but the pioneer stage of any society is often marked by unusual problems. Luckily, our pioneer stage is almost at an end."

"It ceases," Manisfree said, "when the Beast spawns."

The professors paused for a moment of reverent silence.

"You see," Ptolemy said, "we went to considerable difficulty to make the Beast parthenogenetic. Thus, self-fertilizing, its unkillable spawn will quickly spread to neighboring communities. The children will not be programmed to stay within the confines of Chorowait Mountain, as the original Beast is. Instead, each will seek out and terrorize a community of its own."

"But other people will be helpless against them," Joenes said.

"Not for long. They will go to neighboring Chorowait for advice, and will learn the formulae for controlling their own particular Beast. In this way, the communities of the future will be born, and will spread over the face of the earth."

"Nor do we plan to leave it simply at that," Dalton said excitedly. "The Beast is all very well, but neither it nor its children are completely safe against man's destructive ingenuity. Therefore we have obtained more government grants, and we are building other creations."

"We will fill the skies with mechanical vampires!" Ptolemy said.

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"Cleverly articulated zombies will walk the earth!" said Dalton.

"Fantastic monsters will swim in the seas!" said Manisfree.

"Mankind shall live among the fabulous creations it has always craved," Hanley said. "The griffin and the unicorn, the monoceros and the martikora, the hippogrif and the monster rate, all of these and many others will live. Superstition and fear will replace superficiality and boredom; and there will be courage, too, in facing the djin. There will be happiness when the unicorn lays his great head in a virgin's lap, and joy when the Little People reward a virtuous man with a bag of gold! The greedy man will be infallibly punished by the coreophagi, and the lustful must beware of meeting the incarnate Aphrodite Pandemos. Man will no longer be alone in the universe, but will live with creatures as marvelous as himself. And he will live in accordance with the only rules his nature will accept—the rules which come from a supernatural made manifest upon the earth!"

Joenes looked at the professors, and their faces glowed with happiness. Seeing this, Joenes did not ask if the rest of the world outside of Chorowait wanted this reign of the fabulous, or if they should perhaps be consulted in it. Nor did Joenes state his own impression, that this reign of the fabulous would be nothing more than a quantity of man-made machines built to act like the products of men's imaginations, and, instead of being divine and infallible, would be merely mortal and prone to error, absurdly destructive, extremely irritating, and bound to be destroyed as soon as men had contrived the machinery to do so.

But it was not entirely a regard for his colleagues' feelings that stopped Joenes from saying these and other things. He also feared that such dedicated men might kill him if he showed a real spirit of dissent. Therefore he kept silent, and on the long ride back to the University he brooded on the difficulties of man's existence.

When they reached the University, Joenes decided that he would leave the cloistered life as soon as he possibly could.

10. HOW JOENES ENTERED THE GOVERNMENT

(As told by Ma'aoa of Samoa.)

An opportunity to leave the University came the following week when a government recruiter visited the campus. This man's name was Ollin, and his title was Under-Secretary in Charge of Government Placement. Joenes went to see him, and Under-Secretary Ollin greeted him heartily.

"Take a seat," Ollin said. "Smoke? Drink? Glad to see some-

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one turn up. I thought all you egg-heads here at Stephen's Wood had your own plans for saving the world. Some sort of mechanical monster, isn't it?"

Joenes was amazed that Ollin knew about the Chorowait experiment.

"We keep our eyes open," Ollin said. "It had us fooled at first because we thought it was just some gimmick for a monster movie. But now we know, and we've got FBI men on the case. Working undercover, they presently make up one-third of the Chorowait group. We're going to move as soon as we've collected sufficient evidence."

"The mechanical Beast may spawn soon," Joenes said.

"It'll just give us more evidence," Ollin said. "Anyhow, let's direct our attention to you. I take it you're interested in government service?"

"I am. My name is Joenes, and I—"

"I know all that," Ollin said. He unlocked a large briefcase and removed a notebook.

"Let me see," he said, turning over the pages. "Joenes. Arrested in San Francisco for making an alleged subversive speech. Brought before a Congressional committee and judged an uncooperative and disrespectful witness, particularly in respect to your association with Arnold and Ronald Black, the twin Octagon spies. Tried by Oracle and given a ten-year suspended sentence. Spent a brief time in the Hollis Home for the Criminally Insane, then found employment at this University. During your time here you met daily with the founders of the Chorowait community."

Ollin closed the notebook and asked, "Is that more or less correct?"

"More or less," Joenes said, sensing the impossibility of argument or explanation. "I suppose my record renders me unfit for service in the government."

Ollin burst into hearty laughter at this. Wiping his eyes, he said, "Joenes, these surroundings must have made you a little soft in the head. There's nothing so terrible in your record. Idealism can't always be channeled in the ways the government would like to see it channeled. We in government aren't hypocrites, Joenes. We know that none of us is absolutely pure, and that every man has some little thing which he isn't exactly proud of. So you have really done nothing at all."

Joenes expressed his gratitude at the government's attitude.

"The man you can really thank," Ollin said, "is Sean Feinstein. In his capacity as Special Assistant to the Presidential Assistant, he put forth these views about you. We made a careful study of your case, and decided that you were the sort of man we wanted in government."

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"Am I really?" Joenes asked.

"Past a doubt. We politicians are realists. We recognize the myriad problems which assail us today. To solve those problems we need the most daring, independent, fearless thinkers we can get. Nothing but the best will do, and no secondary considerations will stop us. We need men like *you*, Joenes. Will you enter the service of the Government?"

"I will!" Joenes cried, aflame with enthusiasm. "And I will try to live up to the faith that you and Sean Feinstein have in me."

"I knew you'd say that, Joenes," Ollin said huskily. "They all do. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Sign here and here."

Ollin presented Joenes with a standard government contract, which Joenes signed. The Under-Secretary put the paper in his briefcase and shook Joenes warmly by the hand.

"Your position in the government starts as of this moment. Thank you, God Bless you, and remember that we are all counting on you. Now you must excuse me since I have a speaking engagement at Radcliffe."

The following morning, Joenes received an official letter by special messenger. He was ordered to report to Room 432, East Wing, Portico Building, Washington, D.C., and to do so with the utmost dispatch. The letter was signed by no less a person than John Mudge, Special Assistant to the Services Coordination Chief.

Joenes took immediate leave of his colleagues, gazed for the last time on the green lawns and concrete paths of the University, and boarded the first jet for Washington.

It was a thrilling moment for Joenes when he arrived in the capital city. He walked down the rose marble streets toward the Portico Building, passing on his way the White House, seat of imperial American power. To his left was the great expanse of the Octagon, built to replace the smaller Pentagon. Beyond that were the Buildings of Congress.

For Joenes, these buildings were the embodiment of the romance of history. The glory of Old Washington, capitol of the Hellenic Confederation before the disastrous Civil War; swam before his eyes. It was as though he could see the world-shaking debates between Pericles, representative of the marble cutter's lobby, and Themistocles, the fiery submarine commander. He thought of Cleon coming here from his home in Arcadian New Hampshire, putting forth his terse ideas about the prosecution of the war. The philosopher Alcibiades had lived here for a time, representing his native city of Louisiana. Xenephon had stood on these steps, and had been given a standing ovation for lead-

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ing his ten thousand men all the way from the banks of the Yalu to the sanctuary of Pusan.

The memories crowded thick and fast! Here Thucydides had written his definitive, history of the tragic War Between the States. Hippocrates the Hellenic Surgeon-General had conquered yellow fever here; and true to the oath he had devised, had never spoken of it. And here Lycurgus and Solon, the first judges of the Supreme Court, had held their famous debates on the nature of justice.

These famous men seemed to crowd around him as he crossed Washington's wide boulevards. Thinking of them, Joenes resolved to do his utmost, and to prove worthy of his ancestors.

In an ecstatic frame of mind, Joenes arrived at Room 432 of the East Room of the Portico Building. John Mudge, the Special Assistant, made him welcome without delay.

"Well, Joenes," Mudge said, "you've been assigned to us, and we're very glad to have you. I think I should explain immediately what this office does. We operate as an inter-Service agency designed to avoid duplication of effort between the semi-autonomous forces of the military. Aside from that, we also serve as an intelligence and information agency for all Service programs, and as a governmental policy planner in the fields of military, psychological and economic warfare."

"That sounds like quite a lot," Joenes said.

"It is far too much," Mudge answered. "And yet, our work is absolutely necessary. Take our primary task of coordination between the Services. Only last year, before this office was formed, elements of our Army fought a three-day pitched battle in the deepest jungles of northern Thailand. Imagine their chagrin when the smoke cleared and they found that they had been attacking a strongly entrenched battalion of U.S. Marines! Imagine the effect upon Service Morale! With our military obligations stretched so thinly across the globe, anl so intricately disposed, we must be forever vigilant against incidents of this kind."

Joenes nodded in agreement. Mudge went on to explain the necessity for their other duties.

"Take intelligence, for example," Mudge said. "At one time that had been the special province of the Central Intelligence Agency. But today, CIA refuses to release its information, requesting instead that it be given more troops to deal with the problems it uncovers."

"Deplorable," Joenes said.

"And of course the same situation holds true in greater degree for Army Intelligence, Navy Intelligence, Air Force Intelligence, Marine Corps Intelligence, Space Corps Intelligence, and all the

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others. The patriotism of the men of these Services cannot be doubted; but each, having been given the means of waging independent warfare, considers his Service the only one in a position to judge the danger and prosecute the conflict to a conclusion. This state of affairs renders any information on the enemy contradictory and suspect. And this in turn paralyzes the government, which has no reliable information upon which to plan policy."

"I had no idea the problem was so severe," Joenes said.

"It is severe and insoluble," Mudge replied. "To my way of thinking, the fault lies in the very size of the governmental organization, which has swollen past all precedent. A scientist friend of mine once told me that an organism which grows beyond its natural size tends to break up into its component parts, eventually to begin the growing process all over again. We have grown too huge, and fragmentation has set in. Yet our growth was a natural consequence of the times, and we cannot allow any breakup to occur as yet. The Cold War is still upon us, and we must patch and mend and hold our Services in some semblance of order and cooperation. We in Coordination must discover the truth about the enemy, present this truth to the government as policy, and induce the Services to act upon this policy. We must persevere, until the external danger is past, and then hope to reduce the size of our bureaucracy before the forces of chaos do the job for us."

"I think I understand," Joenes said. "And I am in full accord."

"I knew you would be," Mudge replied. "I knew it from the time I read your dossier and requested your appointment here. I told myself that this man would be a natural coordinator, and in spite of many difficulties I had you cleared for government service."

"But I thought that was the work of Sean Feinstein," Joenes said.

Mudge smiled. "Sean is little more than a figurehead who signs the papers we put in front of him. He is also a first-class patriot, having volunteered for the secret but necessary role of government scapegoat. In Sean's name we make all dubious, unpopular, or questionable decisions. When they turn out well, the Chiefs take the credit. When they turn out badly, Sean takes the blame. In this way, the usefulness of the many is not impaired."

"It must be very hard on Sean," Joenes said.

"Of course it is. But perhaps Sean would not be happy if things were not very hard on him. So a psychologist friend of mine believes. Another psychologist of my acquaintance, of a more mystical turn of mind, believes that Sean Feinstein is fulfilling an obligatory

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historical function, that he is destined to be a prime mover of men and events, a crucial figure in all histories, and a vital force in the enlightenment of the people; and that for these reasons he is detested and reviled by the populace he serves. But wherever the truth lies, I find Sean an extremely necessary person."

"I would like to meet him and shake his hand," Joenes said.

"That will not be possible just yet," Mudge said. "Sean is presently serving a term of solitary confinement upon a diet of bread and water. He was found guilty of stealing 24 atomic howitzers and 187 atomic grenades from the U.S. Army."

"Did he actually steal those things?" Joenes asked.

"Yes. But he did so at our request. We armed a Signal Corps Detachment with them, and they succeeded in winning the battle of Rosy Gulch in southeastern Bolivia. The Signal Corps, I might add, had long requested those weapons in vain."

"I am very sorry for Sean," Joenes said. "What is his sentence?"

"Death," said Mudge. "But he will be pardoned. He always is. Sean is too important not to be pardoned."

Mudge looked away for a moment, then turned back to Joenes.

"Your particular work," Mudge said, "will be of the utmost importance. We are sending you to Russia on a tour of inspection and analysis. Many such inspections have been made in the past, of course. But either they have been made from the bias of one Service, in which case they are worthless, or they have been made from a coordinated standpoint, in which case they have been marked Top Secret and filed unread in the Top Secret room beneath Fort Knox. I have my chief's assurance, and I give you mine, that no such fate will befall your report. It will be read and acted upon. We are determined to impose Coordination, and anything you say about the enemy will be accepted and utilized. Now, Joenes, you will receive a full clearance, then a briefing, then orders."

Mudge took Joenes to Security Division, where a colonel in charge of Phrenology felt his head for suspicious bumps. After that, Joenes ran the gauntlet of government astrologists, card-readers, tea-leaf readers, physiognomists, psychologists, casuists, and computers. At the end he was declared loyal, sane, responsible, trustworthy, reverent, and above all, lucky. On the basis of this he was given a Portmanteau Clearance and allowed to read classified documents.

We have only a partial list of the papers which Joenes read in the gray iron Secrets Room, with two armed guards standing beside

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him, blindfolded to be sure they would not inadvertently glance at the precious documents. But we know that Joenes read:

"The Yalta Papers," which told of the historic meeting between President Roosevelt, Czar Nicholas II, and Emperor Ming. Joenes learned how the fateful decisions made in Yalta affected present-day politics; and he learned of the violent opposition to those decisions which were voiced by Don Winslow, the Supreme Naval Commander.

Next he read, "I was a Male War Bride," a devastating expose of unnatural practices in the Armed Services.

And he also read the following:

"Little Orphan Annie Meets Wolf Man," a detailed espionage manual written by one of the most accomplished female spies who ever lived.

"Tarzan and the Black City," an extraordinary account of commando activities in Russian-held East Africa."

"The Cantos," author unknown, a cryptic statement of the enemy's monetary and racial theories.

"Buck Rogers Enters Mungo," a documentary account of the latest exploit of the Space Corps, illustrated.

"First Principles," by Spencer, "The Apocrypha," author unknown, "The Republic," by Plato, and "Maleus Malificarum," jointly authored by Torquemada, Bishop Berkeley, and Harpo Marx. These four works were the soul and spearhead of communist doctrine, and we can be sure that Joenes read them with great profit.

Of course he also read "The Playboy of the Western World," by Emmanuel Kant, which was the definitive refutation of the above-mentioned communist works.

All of these things have been lost to us, due to the unfortunate circumstances of their having been written on paper instead of learned by heart. We would give much to know the substance of those works which shaped the brilliant and erratic politics of the times. And we cannot help but ask whether Joenes read the few 20th century classics which have come down to our own time, Did he peruse the stirring "Boots," cast in enduring bronze? Did he read "The Practical Man's Guide to Real Estate," that monumental fantasy which almost singlehandedly shaped the temper of the 20th century? Did Joenes ever meet the venerable Robinson Crusoe, his contemporary, greatest of the 20th century poets? Did he speak with any of the members of the Swiss Family Robinson, whose sculptures can be seen in many of our museums?

Alas, Joenes never spoke of these cultural things. Instead, his accounts focus upon matters which were of far greater concern to his beleaguered age.

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So it was that Joenes, after reading steadily for three days and three nights, arose and left the gray iron Secrets Room and its blindfolded guards. He was now fully cognizant of the state of the nation and of the world. With high hopes and dire forebodings he opened his orders.

These orders instructed him to report to room 18891, floor 12, level 6, wing 63, subsection AJB-2, of the Octagon. With the orders was a map to aid him in finding his way around that massive structure. When he had come to room 18891, a high Octagon official known only as Mr. M. would give him his final instructions, and arrange his departure on a special jet for Russia.

Joenes's heart filled with joy when he read these orders, for at last he had a chance to play a part in great affairs. He rushed off to the Octagon to receive his final instructions and be off. But the duty Joenes wished to perform was not so easily captured as all that.

11. THE OCTAGON ADVENTURES

(The Octagon Adventures and the four stories which comprise it are told by Maubingi of Tahiti.)

Afire with anticipation, Joenes entered the Octagon. He stared around him for a moment, never having imagined that so enormous and majestic a building could exist. Then, recovering, he walked swiftly down great halls and corridors, up stairways, through bypasses, across lobbies, and down more corridors.

By the time his first flush of enthusiasm had worn off, he was able to see that his map was hopelessly incorrect, for its various designations bore no reference to anything he saw around him. It seemed, in fact, to be a map of a different building. Joenes was now deep in the heart of the Octagon, unsure of the way which lay ahead, dubious of his ability to retrace his footsteps. Therefore he put the map in his pocket and decided to ask advice of the first person he met.

Soon he overtook a man walking down the corridor. This man wore the uniform of a colonel in the Cartography Department, and his bearing was kindly and distinguished.

Joenes stopped the colonel, explaining that he was lost and that his map seemed to be useless.

The colonel glanced at Joenes's map and said, "Oh, yes, that's perfectly in order. This map is our Octagon Series A443-321B, which my office published only last week."

"But it doesn't tell me anything," Joenes said.

"You're damned right it doesn't," the colonel answered proudly. "Do you have any idea how impor-

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tant this building is? Did you know that every top government agency, including the most secret ones, are housed here?"

"I know that the building is very important," Joenes said. "But—"

"Then you can understand the position we would be in," the colonel went on, "if our enemies really understood the building and its office. Spies would infiltrate these corridors. Disguised as soldiers and congressmen, they would have access to our most vital information. No security measures could hope to restrain a cunning and determined spy armed with information like that. We would be lost, my dear sir, utterly lost. But a map like this, which is most confusing to a spy, is one of our most important safeguards."

"I suppose it is," Joenes said politely.

The Colonel of Cartography touched Joenes's map lovingly and said, "You have no idea how difficult it is to make such a map."

"Really?" Joenes said. "I would have thought it quite simple to construct a map of an imaginary place."

"The layman always thinks that. Only a fellow mapmaker, or a spy, could appreciate our problems. To construct a map which tells nothing, and yet which seems true, giving even an expert the sensation of versimilitude—that, my friend, requires art of the highest order!"

"I'm sure it does," Joenes said. "But why do you bother making a false map at all?"

"For the sake of security," the colonel said. "But to understand that, you must know how a spy thinks when he gets a map like this; then you would see how this map strikes directly at the spy's greatest weakness, rendering him more ineffectual than no map at all would do. And to understand all that, you must comprehend all mentality of a spy."

Joenes admitted that he was bewildered by this explanation. But the colonel said it was merely a matter of understanding the nature of a spy. And to illustrate this nature, he then told Joenes a story about a spy, and how he behaved when he was in possession of the map.

THE STORY OF THE SPY

The spy (said the colonel) has overcome all previous obstacles. Armed with the precious map, he has penetrated deep into the building. Now he tries to use the map, and sees at once that it doesn't represent the thing he seeks. But he also sees that the map is beautifully made and expensively printed on government paper; it bears a government serial number and a countersigned stamp of approval. It is a clear, lucid map, a triumph of the mapmaker's skill.

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Does the spy throw it away and attempt to draw the bewildering complexities around him on a wretched little pocket pad, using only a ball-point pen that doesn't work very well? He most assuredly does not. Even though ultimate success might lie in that direction, our spy is only human. He does not wish to match his puny ability at visualizing, abstracting, drawing and generalizing, against experts in the field. It would take the highest courage and self-confidence for him to throw away this magnificent map and proceed with nothing but his senses to guide him. If he had the necessary qualities to do that, he would never have been a spy in the first place. He would have been a leader of men, or perhaps a great artist or scientist. But he is none of these things; he is a spy; which is to say, a man who has chosen to find out about things rather than to do things, and to discover what others know rather than to search for what he knows. Necessarily he assumes the existence of truths external to himself, since no real spy could believe that his life work was to discover frivolous falsehoods.

This is all very important when we consider the character of any spy, and especially of the spy who has stolen a government map and penetrated deep into the closely guarded building.

I think we might fairly call this spy both genuine and excellent, and imbued with extraordinary dedication, cunning, and perseverance. These qualities have brought him past all dangers to a place of vantage within the building. But these very qualities also tend to shape his thoughts, making certain actions possible and others not. So we must realize that the better he is at his work, the more superb his guile, the stronger his dedication, the longer his experience, the greater his patience, then the less able he is to put aside these virtues, throw away the map, take pen and blank paper in hand and scribble down what he sees. Perhaps the idea of discarding an official government map sounds simple to you; but the spy finds this concept distasteful, foreign, repugnant, and utterly alien to his genius.

Instead, the spy begins to reason about the map in spy-fashion, which he thinks is the only way there is of reasoning, but which we know is merely a way he has of avoiding a discrepancy which life has made manifest, but which instinct and reason reject.

Here is a genuine government-issued map, and there are various corridors and doorways. The spy looks at the map, that document similar to other true and valuable documents he has risked his life to steal. He asks himself, "Can this map be false? I know that it issues from the government, and I know

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that I stole it from an official who evidently prized it and thought it valuable. Am I justified in ignoring this document simply because it seems to have no bearing on what I see around me?"

The spy ponders this question, and at last comes up with the operative word: seems. The map only *seems* to have no bearing! Appearance had momentarily deceived him. He was nearly led astray by the testimony of his senses. The makers of the map almost did this to *him*, a master of tricks and disguises, a man who has spent a lifetime in worming out their secrets. Of course, it is all explicable now.

The spy says, "They tried to fool me with my own tricks! Clumsily, of course, but at least they are starting to think in the right way."

By this the spy means that they are starting to think as he does, thereby making their secrets more comprehensible to him. This pleases him. His bad humor, brought on by the lack of similarity between the map and the building, has now completely vanished. He is cheerful, energetic, prepared for any difficulty, ready to pursue this problem to its ultimate conclusion.

"Let me consider the facts and their implications," says the spy. "First, I know this map is important. Everything about it, and everything I have ever experienced, leads me to that premise. I also know that the map does not *seem* to represent the building which it is supposed to represent. Quite obviously there is a relationship of some kind between the map and the building. What is this relationship, and what is the truth about the map?"

The spy thinks for a moment, then says, "The implication points to a cipher, a mystification which some skilled and cunning craftsman wove into the map, which the people for whom the map is intended know about, but which I hitherto did not know about."

After saying this, the spy draws himself to his full height and adds, "I, however, have spent a lifetime in the solving of ciphers. Indeed, there is nothing I am quite so interested in as ciphers. One might say that I was shaped by destiny to solve ciphers, and that destiny has conspired with chance to put me here, now, with this crucial coded document in my hand."

Our spy feels exalted. But then he asks himself, "Am I not being dogmatic in insisting, at the very start of my investigation, that this document is a true ciphered map and no other thing? Experience has taught me the painful lesson that men are capable of devious thinking. I myself am the living proof of that, for my cunning ways of thinking and of acting have enabled me to remain hidden in the midst of my enemies, and to dis-

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cover many of their secrets. Remembering that, don't I do them an injustice not to allow them the possibility of similar cunning?"

"Very well," the spy says. "Even though reason and instinct tell me that the map is true in every respect, and misleading only because I do not have the key to the cipher, I must admit the possibility of it being false in part, and therefore true only in part. There are good reasons one could give for this assumption. Suppose that the true part of the map is the only part which was needed by the official I stole it from. He, armed with a prior knowledge I do not have, would follow only the part which is true and pertinent to his work. Being the dull civil servant he is, and above all being uninterested in maps and ciphers, he would simply follow the true part to his office, and would ignore the false part. The map itself, with its false section joined so cleverly to the true, would not bother him. And why should it? His work has nothing to do with maps. He has no more interest in the truth or falseness of the map than I have in the details of his petty job. Like me, he has no time to worry about complicated matters which do not concern him. He can use the map without doing violence to his feelings."

The spy is amused and saddened when he thinks of this man, using the map but having no interest in it. How strange people are! How odd that the official made mere use of the map, but never questioned its mysterious nature; while the spy knows that the only important matter is a complete understanding of the map and what it represents. From this understanding all other things will flow, and the secrets of the entire building will be accessible. This seems so obvious to him that he can't understand the official's lack of concern with the map. The spy's own interest seems to him so natural, so necessary, so universal, that he is almost led to believe that the official is not human, but is instead a member of some other species.

"But no," he tells himself. "It may feel that way, but the real difference between the official and me probably lies in heredity, or in environmental influences, or something like that. I must not let it disturb me. I have always known how strange and unknowable human beings are. Even spies, the most easily understood people in the world, have different methods and hold different attitudes. Yes, it is a strange world, and I have very little knowledge of it. What do I know of history, psychology, music, art or literature? Oh, I could hold a sensible conversation on those subjects, but deep in my heart I know that I know nothing about them."

The spy is unhappy about this.

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But then he thinks, "Luckily, there *is* one thing which I do understand. That is spying. No man can do everything, and I have done very well to become the expert I am in my own field. In that expertness lies my hope and my salvation. In that very narrowness lies my true depth, and my yardstick with which to test the world. After all, I know a great deal about the history and psychology of spying, and I have read most of the literature of spying. I have looked at the famous paintings of spies, and have frequently heard the well-known opera about spies. Thus, my depth gives me breadth. My deep knowledge of this one thing gives me a firm base in the world. I can stand upon that base and look at other matters with a certain perspective."

"Of course," the spy reminds himself, "I must never make the error of thinking that all things can be reduced to a matter of spying and its techniques. Even if this appears to be the case, it is the sort of simplification which an intelligent man must avoid. No, spying is not everything! It is merely the key to everything."

Having established that, the spy goes on to say, "Spying is *not* everything; but luckily for me, this matter of the map does concern spying. Maps are the very heart of spying, and when I hold a map in my hand and know that the government made it, then I am dealing with a problem for which I have a special competency. A map in cipher is of particular concern to spying, as is a map which is partially false. Even a map which was wholly false would necessarily concern spying."

Now the spy is ready to analyze the map. He tells himself, "There are three possibilities. First, the map is true, and in cipher. In that case, I must decode it, using all my patience and skill.

"Secondly, the map is only partially true and in cipher. In that case I will determine which is the true part, and then decode it. That might seem difficult to a person who knew nothing about the work; but to the expert it is the sort of difficulty which can be overcome. And as soon as I have decoded the tiniest fraction of the map's true portion, all the rest will open for me. That would leave the false portion, which someone else might throw away. But I would not. I would treat the false portion exactly as I would treat the entire map if it were false, which is possibility number three.

"Thirdly, if the entire map is false, I must see what kind of information I can extract from that falseness. Granted that the idea of a false government map is absurd, let's say that's the case. Or rather, let's say that falseness was the *intention* of the makers of the map. In such a case I would have to ask, how does one draw a false map?

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"It is no easy matter, that I know. If the mapmaker works in this building, moves up and down its corridors, steps into and out of its offices, then he knows the building as no other person could. If this man tries to draw a false map, how can he avoid inadvertently drawing some portion of the true building?

"He can't, really. The truth in which he is steeped would render his quest for absolute falseness impossible. And if he drew by accident any portion of the true map, I could infallibly find that true part, and all of the building's jealously guarded security would be for nothing.

"But let's assume that the high officials are aware of all this and have given careful study to the problem of constructing a false map. Let's give them the benefit of every doubt within the necessities of the situation. They know that the map, in order to serve its purpose, must be drawn by a skilled mapmaker who will make it conform to the logical rules for maps and for buildings; and that the map must be false, and not true even inadvertently.

"To solve the problem, let us say that the high officials find a civilian mapmaker who had no knowledge of the building. He is brought to the place blindfolded, given a carefully guarded office, and told to draw a map of an imaginary building. He does so; but the problem of inadvertent truth still remains. Therefore, a government mapmaker who *does* know the truth must check the map. The government mapmaker checks (and no person but a mapmaker would be competent to judge) and he says that this map is excellent since it is entirely false.

"In that ultimate case, the map is still nothing but a cipher! It has been drawn by a skilled civilian mapmaker, and thus conforms to the general principles which govern the drawing of maps. It is of a building, and conforms to the rules for drawing buildings. It has been judged false; but it has been judged so by an official mapmaker *who knew the truth,* and was able to decide about every detail of the map on the basis of his knowledge of the true building. The so-called false map, then, is merely a sort of reversed or distorted image of the truth known by the official mapmaker; and the relationship between the true building and the false map has been established through his judgement, since he knew both true and false and judged their dissimilarity. His necessary intermediary judgement demonstrates the nature of the false map—which, being a logical distortion that conceals the truth, may be called a cipher!

"And since this cipher follows the accepted rules for maps and buildings, it is susceptible to cipher analysis!"

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This completes the spy's analysis of the three possibilities of the map, all of which can now be reduced to one: that the map is true, and in cipher.

Dazed by this discovery, the spy says, "They thought they could trick me, but it cannot be done in my chosen field. In my search for truth, I have lived all my life by falsehood and deceit; but I have always known my own reality. Because of myself and my search, I above all men know that there is no such thing as falsehood, and that everything is either the truth or a cipher. If it is the truth, I follow it; and if it is a cipher, I solve it. A cipher, after all, is merely a concealed truth!"

At last the spy is happy. He has moved through the deepest perplexities, and has had the courage to face the most terrible possibilities. His reward is before him.

For now, paying strict attention to the map, and holding that well-made creation with loving care, the spy begins the task that is the culmination of his life, and which eternity would not be long enough to complete. He starts upon his attempt to decipher the false map.

THE MAPMAKER'S EXPLANATION

When the colonel had finished, he and Joenes stood silently for a while. Then Joenes said, "I can't help feeling sorry for that spy."

"It was a sad story," the colonel said. "But then, all men's stories are sad."

"If the spy is caught, what will his punishment be?"

"He has already imposed it on himself," the colonel replied. "His punishment is to decipher the map."

Joenes could think of no worse fate. He asked, "Do you catch many spies here in the Octagon?"

"To date," the colonel said, "not a single spy has succeeded in passing our outer security measures and penetrating into the building proper."

The colonel must have noticed a look of disappointment on Joenes's face, for he added quickly, "That, however, does not invalidate my story. If a spy did get in here in spite of all security, he would behave just as I told you. And believe me, spies are caught every week in the network of outer defences."

"I didn't notice any defences," Joenes said.

"Of course not. For one thing, you aren't a spy. For another, security knows its work well enough not to reveal its presence, but only to act when necessary. That is how matters stand at present. For the future, when more cunning spies are born, we in Cartography have our false maps."

Joenes nodded. He was eager now to continue his own job, but unsure how to go about it. Decid-

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ing on indirection, he asked the colonel, "Are you convinced that I am not a spy?"

"Everyone is a spy to some extent," the colonel said. "But in regard to the special meaning you imply, yes, I am quite convinced that you are not a spy."

"Well then," Joenes said, "I must tell you that I am under special orders to go to a certain office here."

"May I see those orders?" the colonel asked. Joenes handed them over. The colonel studied the orders and gave them back.

"They seem official," the colonel said. "You should certainly go to that office at once."

"That is my problem," Joenes said. "The truth is, I'm lost. I tried to follow one of your excellent false maps, and naturally enough I found nothing at all. Since you know I'm not a spy, and also know that I'm on official business, I would appreciate any assistance you could give me."

Joenes had made this request in a careful and roundabout way, which he thought would be most suitable to the colonel's mentality. But the colonel looked away with an expression of embarrassment on his dignified features.

"I'm very much afraid I can't help you," the colonel said, "I do not have the faintest idea where your office is, and I don't even know what direction to recommend."

"But that's impossible!" Joenes cried. "You are a cartographer, an official mapmaker of this building. And even though you draw false maps, I'm sure you also draw true ones, since that must be in your nature."

"All that you say is correct," the colonel said. "Especially that last about my nature. Anyone can deduce the nature of a cartographer, since his nature resides in his work. That work is to draw maps of the most exacting accuracy, maps so precise and lucid that the dullest of men could follow them. My function has been perverted by necessities beyond my control, so I must spend much of my time drawing false maps which give the appearance of truth. But as you have guessed, nothing can stop a genuine mapmaker from drawing genuine maps. I would do it even if it were forbidden. And luckily, it is not forbidden. It is expressly commanded."

"By whom?" Joenes asked.

"By the high officials of this building," the colonel said. "Those persons control security, and they use the true maps to aid them in disposing their forces. But of course, the true maps are a mere convenience for them, a bit of paper they refer to as casually as you would glance at your watch to see whether it was three-thirty or three-forty. If necessary they could do without the maps entirely, relying on their knowledge

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and power. They might find it an annoyance, but not a serious one."

"If you draw true maps for them," Joenes said, "surely you can tell me where to go now."

"I can't," the colonel said. "Only the high officials know the building well enough to go where they want."

The colonel saw Joenes's look of disbelief. He said, "I know how unreasonable all this must sound to you. But you see, I draw only one section of the building at a time; no other method would work since the building is so vast and so complex. I draw my section and send it to a high official by messenger, and later I draw another section, and so on. Perhaps you think I could combine my knowledge of the various parts and know the whole? I tell you at once that I cannot. For one thing, there are other cartographers who draw parts of the building which I never have time to see. But even if I mapped the entire structure by myself, piece by piece, I could never combine all those pieces into an understandable unity. Any one portion of the building seems comprehensible to me, and I represent it with great accuracy on paper. But when it comes to understanding all the countless sections I have mapped, then I become confused, I can't tell one part from the other. And if I think about it for very long, my sleep and appetite are affected, I smoke too much, I find solace in drink, and my work suffers. Sometimes, when these bad spells are on me, I make inaccuracies, and I do not perceive my errors until the officials send that portion of the map back for revision. This shakes my faith in my own proven abilities; I determine to end my bad habits and stick to my task of skillful portrayal of one section at a time, not bothering my head about the whole."

The colonel paused and rubbed his eyes. "As you may expect," he went on, "my good resolves don't last for long, especially when I am in the company of my fellow cartographers. At those times we sometimes discuss the building and try to determine among us what it really is. Usually we cartographers are shy men; like spies, we prefer to do our work in solitude and not to discuss it with each other. But the solitude we love can become overwhelming; and then we overcome the limits of our nature and talk about the building, each of us adding his increment of knowledge eagerly and without jealousy, all of us bent upon understanding the whole building. But it is those times which prove the most discouraging."

"Why is that?" Joenes asked.

"As I told you," the colonel said, "our map sections are sometimes sent back for revision, and we assume that we have made mistakes

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even though there is never any official comment. But when we mapmakers talk together, we occasionally find that two of us have mapped the same section, each remembering and drawing it differently. That sort of human error is to be expected, of course. But what is disconcerting is when the high officials accept both versions. You can imagine a mapmaker's sensations when he learns something like that!"

"Do you have any explanation for it?" Joenes asked.

"Well, for one thing, mapmakers have their individual styles and idiosyncrasies, and that might account for the discrepancy. For another, even the best of memories is untrustworthy, so we might not have mapped the same section. But to my way of thinking these explanations are not sufficient, and only one thing makes sense."

"What's that?" Joenes asked.

"I believe that workmen, under orders from the high officials, are continually changing portions of the building. It is the only explanation that satisfies me. I have even caught glimpses of what could only be workmen. But even if I hadn't seen them, I would still believe the same. Just consider: The high officials are concerned with security, and the finest security possible would be to keep the building in a constant state of change. Next, if the building were static, a single mapmaking survey would be sufficient, instead of the continual drawing and revising we are called upon to do. Finally, the high officials are trying to control a complex and ever-changing world; therefore as the world changes, so must the building. More offices must be built, and old ones have to be altered for new tenants; a row of cubicles must be removed and an auditorium put in its place; whole corridors must be closed down to allow the installation of new wiring and plumbing. And so forth. Some of these changes are extremely evident. Any man can see them, not only a mapmaker. But other changes are done apparently in secrecy, or in parts of the building I do not visit until the work is completed. Then the new looks bafflingly like the old, although I can still sense a difference. It is for those reasons that I believe the building is continually being changed, thus rendering a complete knowledge of it impossible."

"If this place is as unknowable as you say it is," Joenes said, "then how do you find your way back to your own office?"

"There, I am ashamed to say, my mapmaking skill does not help me. I find my office just as everyone else here finds his office—by something which resembles instinct. The other workers don't know this; they think they find their way by some process of the

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intelligence, some kind of a turn-right turn-left system. Like the spy, they believe they could learn anything about the building if they wanted to. It would make you laugh or cry to hear the statements these people make about the building, even though they have never ventured beyond the corridor that leads to their office. But I, a mapmaker, wander all over the building in my work. Sometimes great changes occur in territory I have already passed, rendering it unrecognizable. Then something which is not knowledge guides me back to my office, exactly as it guides the office workers."

"I see," Joenes said, though he was actually very confused. "So you really don't know what I should do in order to find this office?"

"I really do not know."

"Could you give me any advice about the way I should go about looking, or what sort of thing I should look for?"

"I am an expert on the building," the colonel said sadly, "and I could talk about it for a year without repeating myself. But unfortunately, there is nothing I can say which would aid your particular situation."

Joenes asked, "Do you think I will ever find the office I was sent to?"

"If your business here is important," the colonel said, "and if the high officials really want you to find the office, then I'm sure you'll have no trouble. On the other hand, your business may not be of importance to anyone but you, in which case your search will doubtless be a long one. True, you carry official orders; but I suspect that the high officials occasionally send men to imaginary offices simply to test the security of the inner defences of the building. If that is the case with you, your chance of success is small indeed."

"One way or another," Joenes said gloomily, "my prospects don't look very good."

"Well, those are the risks all of us run here," the colonel said. "Spies suspect that their rulers have sent them on a dangerous mission simply to get rid of them, and mapmakers suspect that they are ordered to draw simply to keep their fingers out of mischief. We all have our doubts, and I can only wish you the best of luck and the hope that your doubts are never proven true."

With that, the colonel bowed courteously and continued down the corridor.

Joenes watched him go and considered following him. But he had already been that way, and it seemed a necessary act of faith to go forward into what he did not know instead of turning back at the first discouragement.

So Joenes went on, but not entirely out of faith. He also sus-

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pected that the corridors behind him might have been changed by now.

Joenes walked down greathalls and corridors, up stairways, through bypasses, across lobbies, and down more corridors. He resisted the urge to consult his beautiful false map, but he couldn't bring himself to throw the map away. So he kept it in his pocket and continued walking.

There was no way of telling the passage of time, but at last Joenes became very weary. He was now in an ancient part of the building. The floors here were of wood rather than marble, and they were badly decayed, making the footing dangerous. The walls, built of an inferior plaster, were flaked and torn. In some places the plaster had fallen away to reveal the wiring of the building, most of its insulation rotten and constituting an obvious fire hazard. Not even the ceiling seemed secure, but bulged ominously in places, making Joenes fear it would come down on him.

Whatever offices had once been here were now gone, and the place was in need of immediate and drastic repairs. Joenes even saw a workman's hammer lying on the floor; this convinced him that repairs would someday be made, even though he didn't see any workman.

Lost and deeply discouraged, Joenes lay down on the floor, his great fatigue allowing him no other choice. He stretched out and within a minute fell asleep.

THE STORY OF THESEUS

Joenes awoke later with a feeling of uneasiness. Standing up, he heard a sound of footsteps coming down the corridor.

Soon he saw the maker of the footsteps. He was a man, tall and in the prime of life, with a face both intelligent and suspicious. This man held a huge ball of string mounted on a spindle. As he walked, he unwound the string, which lay on the floor of the corridor and glittered faintly.

As soon as he saw Joenes, the man's face tightened into angry lines. He drew a revolver from his belt and took aim.

Joenes called out, "Wait! Whatever you think, I have never done you any harm!"

Controlling himself with obvious effort, the man did not pull the trigger. His eyes, which had gone blank and dangerous, regained a normal appearance. He put the revolver back in his belt and said, "I am very sorry to have startled you. The truth is, I thought you were someone else."

"Do I look like him?" Joenes asked.

"Not really," the man said.

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"But I become nervous in this damnable place and tend to shoot first and think second. Still, my mission is so vital that these actions of a hasty and high-strung nature can surely be forgiven."

"What is your mission?" Joenes asked.

The man's face glowed when Joenes asked that question. Proudly he said, "My mission is to bring peace, happiness, and freedom to the world."

"That's quite a lot," Joenes said.

"I could never be satisfied with anything less," the man said. "Mark my name well. It is George P. Theseus, and I confidently expect to be remembered as the man who destroyed dictatorship and freed the people. The deed which I do here will live as a symbol to all men, and will also be good and just in its own right."

"What deed are you going to do?" Joenes asked.

"Singlehanded, I am going to kill a tyrant," Thesus said. "This man has managed to find a position of power within the building, and many gullible fools think he is a benefactor because he orders the building of dams to control floods, distributes food to the starving, finances medical work for the sick, and does many other gaudy things of that sort. This may deceive some people, but it does not deceive me."

"If he really does that work," Joenes said, "then he does indeed sound like a benefactor."

"I might have expected you to say that," Theseus said bitterly. "His tricks have taken you in, just as they have taken in most people. I cannot hope to change your mind. I have no skill at devious argument, while that man has the world's best propagandists at his service. My vindication must rest with the future. For now, I can only tell what I know, and tell it in a blunt, unpleasing manner."

"I will be very pleased to hear," Joenes said.

"Well then," Theseus said, "consider this. In order to do his good deeds, this man had to reach high office. To reach high office, he passed out bribes and sowed dissension, divided people into warring factions, killed off those who opposed him, corrupted the influential few and starved the needy many. At last, when his power was absolute, he engaged in public works. But not out of love for the public. Instead, he did it as you or I might weed a garden, so that he might have something pleasant to look at instead of something ugly. This is how it is with tyrants, who will do anything to obtain power, and thereby create and perpetuate the very evils they purport to cure."

Joenes was very moved by Theseus's speech, but a little suspicious also, because Theseus had a

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shifty and dangerous look. So Joenes spoke with caution, saying, "I can certainly understand why you want to kill this man."

"No you can't," Theseus said morosely. "You probably think that I'm filled with nothing but hot air and ideals, a sort of pious madman with a gun. Well, you're wrong. I'm an ordinary sort of man, and if I can perform a good deed and win a reputation, then I'm happy to. But my action against this tyrant is primarily for personal reasons."

"How so?" Joenes asked.

"This tyrant," Theseus said, "has private tastes which are as perverted as the wild passions which drove him to power. Information such as this is usually kept secret, or scoffed at as the ravings of envious fools. His skilled propagandists see to that. But I know the truth.

"This great man came driving through my town one day in his armored black Cadillac, secure behind bullet-proof glass, puffing a big cigar and waving to the crowds. Then his eye chanced to fall upon a little girl in the crowd, and he ordered his car to stop.

"His bodyguards chased the people away, except for a few who watched from cellars and rooftops, unseen but seeing. Then the tyrant stepped out of his car and walked up to the little girl. He offered her ice cream and sweets, and begged her to get into the car with him.

"Some of the waiting men understood what was happening, and rushed out to rescue the child. But the bodyguards shot and killed those men. They did so with silenced guns so as not to startle the girl, who was told that the men had decided to go to sleep for a while.

"Although completely innocent, the child had her suspicions. Something in the tyrant's sweating red face and thick trembling lips must have frightened her. So, even though she wanted the ice cream and candy, she stood irresolute while the tyrant trembled with lust, and those of us watching helpless in the cellars sweated out of fear for her.

"After looking wistfully at the gorgeous array of sweets and observing the tyrant's nervous movements, the little girl made up her mind. She would go in the car, she said, if her playmates could go with her. In the terrible vulnerability of her innocence, the child thought she would be safe among her playmates.

"The tyrant went purple with joy. It was evident that this was more than he dared hope for. The more the merrier, that was his sinister motto. He told the girl to bring along all the playmates she wished, and the girl called for her friends.

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"These children came flocking to the black Cadillac. They would have come even without her summons, for the tyrant had had the wit to turn on his car radio, which played the most marvelous and enticing music.

"Music playing, sweets distributed, the tyrant herded them all into his enormous car and closed the door. His bodyguard closed around him, mounted on their powerful motorcycles. Then they all sped away, bound for the most shameful debaucheries in the tyrant's private pleasure room. Those children have never been heard of again. And that first little girl, as you may have guessed, was my own sister, taken under my eyes, with townspeople lying dead on the pavement near her, and with me in the cellar powerless to help."

Theseus wiped his eyes, which were now streaming freely. He said to Joenes, "Now you know the real and personal reasons why I am going to kill the tyrant. To destroy his evil, to avenge my slain friends, to rescue the poor children, but above all, to find my poor sister. I am no hero, I am nothing but an ordinary man. But events have forced me to perform this righteous action."

Joenes, whose own eyes were far from dry, embraced Theseus and said, "I wish you good fortune on your righteous quest, and I only hope you can succeed.

"I have my hopes," Theseus said. "And I am not without the determination and guile necessary for this difficult work. To begin with, I sought out the tyrant's daughter. I ingratiated myself with her, used every winning way I could think of, until at last she fell in love with me. Then I debauched her, and this gave me some satisfaction since she was not far from my poor sister's age. Since she desired marriage, I promised I would marry her, although I would rather slit my throat instead. And I explained to her very artfully what sort of man her father was. At first she would not believe me, the little idiot loved her tyrant father so! But she loved me more, and slowly became convinced of the truth of everything I said. Then, as the final step, I sought her aid, in my plan to kill her father. You can imagine how difficult that was. The horrible little girl did not want her daddy destroyed, no matter how evil he was, no matter what he had done. But I threatened to leave her forever if she would not help me; and between love of me and love of her father she was nearly driven mad. Over and over she begged me to forget the past, which no action could erase. Come away with her, she said, and live in some place far from her father, and never think of him but only of her. As though I could ever

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look at her and not see her father's features! For days she held back, thinking she could convince me to do what she wanted. Endlessly she declared her love for me, stating it in the most exaggerated and hysterical terms. She would never allow us to be parted, she swore, and if death should befall me, then she would kill herself, too. And a great deal of similar nonsense, which, as a sensible man, I found most distasteful.

"At last I turned from her and took my leave. Then her courage crumbled. This young monster, filled with the most exquisite self-loathing, said she would assist me in murdering her beloved father, if only I would swear never to leave her. And of course I swore what she wanted. I would have promised anything to get the assistance I needed.

"She told me what she alone knew; where her father's office could be found in this great building. And she also gave me this ball of string so that I could mark my way and leave quickly once the deed was done. And she herself gave me this revolver. And so here I am, on my way to the tyrant's office."

Joenes said, "You have not found him yet, I see?"

"Not yet," Theseus answered. "The corridors here are very long and winding, as you must have observed yourself. Also, I've had some bad luck. As I mentioned, I am of a hasty disposition and therefore inclined to shoot first and think second. Because of that, quite accidentally, I shot and killed a man in officer's uniform not long ago. He came upon me suddenly, and I fired without thinking."

"Was it the mapmaker?" Joenes asked.

"I do not know who he was," Theseus answered. "But he wore a colonel's badges, and he seemed to have a kindly face."

"It was the mapmaker," Joenes said.

"I am very sorry about it," Theseus said. "But I am even sorrier about the three others I killed in these hallways. I must be an unlucky man."

"Who were they?" Joenes asked.

"To my great sorrow, they were three of the children I had come to rescue. They must have slipped out of the tyrant's rooms and tried to reach freedom. I shot them as I shot the officer, and as I nearly shot you; that is, hastily, before they had a chance to speak. I cannot describe my feelings of regret, and my increased determination that the tyrant shall pay for all this."

"What will you do about his daughter?" Joenes asked.

"I won't follow my natural instincts and kill her," Theseus said. "But that ugly little bitch will never see me again. And I will pray

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that the tyrant's whelp dies of a broken heart."

So saying, Theseus turned his wrathful countenance toward the dim corridors stretching before him.

"And now," he said, "I must go about my work. Goodbye, my friend, and wish me luck."

Theseus walked briskly away, unwinding his glittering cord as he went. Joenes watched until he had vanished around a corner. For a time he could hear receding footsteps, and then there was no sound at all.

Suddenly a woman appeared in the corridor behind Joenes.

She was very young, hardly more than a child. She was plump and red-faced, and her eyes glittered insanely. She walked silently, following after Theseus. And as she walked, she gathered up the string he had so carefully laid down. She had a huge ball of it in her hands, and she continued winding as she came near Joenes, obliterating the trail by which Theseus had thought to return.

As she passed Joenes, she turned and looked at him, and her face was wild with rage and grief. She said not one word, but put a finger to her lips indicating silence. Then she walked swiftly on, gathering the string as she went.

She was gone as swiftly as she had come, and the corridor was deserted. Joenes stared in both directions, but saw nothing to indicate that either Theseus or the girl had ever passed his way. He rubbed his eyes, and once again lay down and fell asleep.

THE STORY OF MINOTAURUS

Joenes was roughly shaken awake. He sprang to his feet, and saw that the hall around him was no longer ancient and decayed, but instead was gleaming and modern. The man who had awakened him was very large through the shoulders, even larger in the paunch, and had a broad, stern, no-nonsense face. No one could have mistaken this man for anything but an official.

"You're Joenes?" the official asked. "Well, if you've finished your nap, I suppose we can get to work."

Joenes expressed his deep regret that he had been sleeping instead of looking for the office to which he had been sent.

"It doesn't matter," the official said. "We have our protocol here, but I hope we're not stuffy. As a matter of fact, it's just as well that you slept. I had been situated in an entirely different part of the building, and I received urgent orders from the Security Chief to move my office here and to effect any repairs I thought necessary. The workman found you asleep and

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decided not to bother you. They did their work in silence, moving you only to repair the piece of floor you lay upon. You didn't even wake up when they moved you."

Joenes looked with increasing amazement at the vast amount of work which had been done while he slept. He turned to the office door, where before there had been only a decayed wall. On that door was neatly stenciled: Room 18891, floor 12, level 6 wing 63, subsection AJB-2. This was the exact address which he had been looking for in vain; and Joenes expressed surprise at the manner in which his search had ended.

"Nothing to be surprised about," the official said. "This is quite an ordinary business procedure here. The highest officials not only know the building and all its contents, but they are also aware of every person's movements within the building. They know only too well the difficulties which a stranger encounters here; and unfortunately, there are very strict laws against helping strangers. But the officials circumvent the law from time to time by moving the office to meet the searcher. Reasonable, eh? Now come in and we'll get to work."

Within the office there was a large desk piled high with papers, and three ringing telephones. The official asked Joenes to take a chair while he dealt with the telephones. He did so with dispatch.

"Speak up man!" he roared into the first telephone. "What's that? Mississippi flooding again? Build a dam! Build ten dams, but get it under control. Send me a memo when you're finished."

"Yes, I can hear you," he shouted into the second telephone. "Starvation in the Panhandle? Distribute food at once! Just sign my name at the government warehouse."

"Calm down and let's hear about it," he bellowed into the third telephone. "Plague sweeping Los Angeles? Fly vaccine in there at once, and send me a wire when it's under control."

The official put down the last of his telephones and said to Joenes, "Those idiotic assistants of mine panic at the slightest thing. Those gutless wonders wouldn't pull a drowning baby out of a bathtub without calling me first for authorization!"

Joenes had listened to the official's swift and decisive words over the telephones, and a suspicion had crossed his mind. He said, "I'm not absolutely certain of this, but I believe that a certain aggrieved young man—"

"—is trying to assassinate me," the official finished for him. "That's it, isn't it? Well, I took care of him half an hour ago. You don't catch Edwin J. Minotaurus napping. My guards took him away, and he'll probably get life imprisonment.

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But don't tell anyone."

"Why not?" Joenes asked.

"Bad publicity," Minotaurus said. "Especially his affair with my daughter, whom, incidentally, he knocked up. I told that little halfwit to bring her friends to the house, but no, she has to sneak out and have dates with anarchists! We're giving out a specially prepared story that this Theseus fellow wounded me so severely that the doctors have despaired of my life; and that he escaped and married my daughter. You can see the value of a story like that."

"Not too clearly," Joenes said.

"Why damn it all, it builds up sympathy for me!" Minotaurus said. "People will feel sorry when they hear that I'm at the point of death. And they'll feel even sorrier when they learn that my only daughter has married my assassin. You see, in spite of my proven abilities, the rabble doesn't like me. This story should win them over."

"It's very ingenious," Joenes said.

"Thank you," said Minotaurus. "Frankly, I had been worrying about my public image for quite some time, and if this moron with his string and his revolver hadn't come along, I would have had to hire somebody. I just hope the newspapers handle the story properly."

"Is there any doubt about that?" Joenes asked.

"Oh, they'll print what I tell them," Minotaurus said moodily. "And I've hired a man to do a book about it, and there'll be a play, and a movie based on the book. Don't worry, I'll milk this for all it's worth."

"What have you told them to write about your daughter?" Joenes asked.

"Well, as I said, she marries this anarchist fellow. And then in a year or two we publish an account of their divorce. Have to give the child a name, you know. But God knows that those idiots will write about my poor fat little Ariadne. Probably make her out to be beautiful, thinking it will please me. And the filthy scum who read this sort of thing will cry, and ask for more. Even kings and presidents, who should know better, will read these lies in preference to a good honest book of statistics. The human race is largely composed of incompetent, lying, bungling fools. I can control them, but I'll be damned if I can understand them."

"What about the children?" Joenes asked.

"What do you mean, what about the children?" Minotaurus said, glaring fiercely.

"Well, Theseus said—"

"That man is a gifted but insane liar," Minotaurus stated. "If it weren't for my position, I would have sued him for libel. Children! Do I look like some kind of per-

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vert? I think we can safely forget any question of children. Now shall we get down to you and your work?"

Joenes nodded, and Minotaurus gave him a quick briefing on the political situation he was likely to find in Russia. He showed Joenes a secret map which gave the approximate positions and strengths of communist and western forces all over the earth. Joenes was stunned by the hugeness of the enemy forces, painted blood red and stretching across many countries. The western forces, painted sky blue, seemed entirely inadequate.

"It isn't as hopeless as it looks," Minotaurus said. "For one thing, that map is only guesswork. For another, we do possess an enormous stockpile of warheads, and a missile system to carry them. We've come a long way with our missiles. The real proof came last year during the Combat Team Easy Field exercises. At that time, a single Gnome missile with an improved warhead was able to blow up Io, one of the moons of Jupiter where we had simulated a Russian base."

"That certainly sounds as though we have strength," Joenes said.

"Oh yes. But the Russians and Chinese also have improved missiles; which succeeded four years ago in blowing up the planet Neptune. In effect, that means a missile stalemate. There may be some disaffection between the Russians and the Chinese because of the Yingdraw incident; but we can't count on that."

"What can we count on?" Joenes asked.

"Nobody knows," Minotaurus said. "That's why we're sending you to find out. *Information* is our problem, Joenes. What is the enemy actually up to? What in hell is going on over there? Do you understand the task, Jones?"

"I think I do," Jones said.

"You are to serve no group or faction; and above all, you are not to make the sort of report you think we would *like* to hear. You are neither to minimize nor to maximize the things you see, but to state them as simply and as objectively as possible."

"I will do my best," Joenes said.

"I don't suppose I can ask for more," Minotaurus said grudgingly.

Then Minotaurus gave Joenes the money and papers he would need for his trip. And instead of sending him back into the corridors to find his way to the entrance, Minotaurus opened a window and pressed a button."

"This is the way I always do it," Minotaurus said, helping Joenes into the seat beside the pilot. "Can't be bothered with all those damned corridors. Good luck, Joenes, and remember what I've said."

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Joenes said that he would, and felt deeply touched by the faith that Minotaurus had in him. The helicopter moved away toward the Washington Airport, where a special auto-piloted jet was waiting. But as the helicopter rose, Joenes thought he heard children's laughter from a room adjoining Minotaurus's office.

12. THE STORY OF RUSSIA

(As told by Pelui of Easter Island.)

Joenes boarded his special jet, and soon he was high in the air racing northward toward the pole. A meal was served to him automatically, and later a movie was shown for his solitary pleasure. The sun hung low on the horizon, and at last the jet's automatic pilot asked Joenes to fasten his seat belt for the landing at Moscow Airport.

Joenes was met by three officials of the Soviet government. They were clad in fur hats and coats, and fur-lined boots, which were necessary protection against the freezing wind that howled across the flat fields. They introduced themselves and took Joenes to a waiting command car for the drive into Moscow. During this ride, Joenes had a chance to look more closely at the men he was to deal with.

Comrade Slavski was bearded to his eyes, which had a dreamy, far-away look in their hazel depths.

Comrade Oruthi was small and clean-shaven, and he walked with a limp.

Marshall Trigask was round and cheerful, and seemed a man to be reckoned with.

At Red Square they parked in front of the Peace Hall. Within, a cheerful fire was blazing. The Russians gestured Joenes to a comfortable chair, and took seats beside him.

"We shall waste no words," Marshall Trigask said. "I shall merely preface this discussion by welcoming you to our beloved Moscow. We are always pleased when accredited Western diplomats such as yourself come to visit us. We are plain speakers, and we expect plain speaking in return. That is how to get things done. You may have noticed on your drive into Moscow—"

"Yes," broke in Slavski, "you must excuse me, I beg your pardon, but did you notice the little white snow crystals falling? And the white winter sky? I'm really very sorry, I shouldn't speak, but even a man such as myself has feelings and sometimes feels impelled to express them. Nature, gentlemen! Excuse me, but nature, yes, there is something about it . . ."

Marshall Trigask broke in, saying, "That is enough, Slavski. The

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most excellent Presidential Envoy Joenes has, I am sure, noticed nature at some time or another. I think we can dispense with such niceties. I am a plain man and I want to speak plainly. Perhaps I seem crude to you, but there it is. I am a soldier, and I cannot be bothered with diplomat's manners. Have I made myself clear?"

"Yes, quite clear," Joenes said.

"Excellent," Marshall Trigask said. "In that case, what is your answer?"

"My answer to what?" Joenes asked.

"To our latest proposals," Trigask said. "Surely you haven't come all this long way simply for a vacation?"

"I'm afraid you'll have to tell me about your proposals," Joenes said.

"They're really very simple," Comrade Oruthi said. "We merely ask that your government dismantle its arms, give up its colony of Hawaii, allow us to take possession of Alaska (which was originally ours), and also give us the northern half of California as a sign of good faith. Upon those terms, we will undertake to do various things which I have forgotten at the moment. What do you say?"

Joenes tried to explain that he had no authority to say anything, but the Russians were unwilling to accept that. Therefore, knowing that such terms would never be accepted in Washington, he said no.

"You see?" Oruthi said. "I told you they'd say no."

"It was worth a try, wasn't it?" Marshall Trigask said. "After all, they might have said yes. But now we can get down to fundamentals. Mr. Joenes, I want you and your government to know that we are prepared to repel any attack of any size which you may mount against us."

"Our defences begin in Eastern Germany," Oruthi said, "and they run in breadth from the Baltic to the Mediterranean. In depth, they extend from Berlin to Omsk. In short, we have outdefended you, and will be happy to prove it."

Slavski, who had been silent for a long time, now said, "You will see all this, my friend! You will see the starlight glittering on the gun-barrels! I beg your pardon, but even a humble man like me, a man who might be mistaken for a fishmonger or a carpenter, has his poetic moments. Yes, it is true even though you laugh, gentlemen! Did our poet say: 'Dark is the grass/ When night shall creep/ Away in sorrow.'/ Ah, you had not thought to hear me quote poetry! Let me assure you, I am quite aware of the impropriety of my quoting poetry! I regret my conduct more than you could imagine, I deplore it in fact, and yet . . ."

Comrade Oruthi gently joggled Slavski's shoulder, and he fell silent. Oruthi said, "You must for-

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get his outbursts, Mr. Joenes. He is a leading Party theoritician, and therefore has a tendency toward self-conscious speech. Where are we?"

"I think I had just explained," Marshall Trigask said, "that our defences are completely in order."

"Exactly," Oruthi said. "Your government should not be deceived on that account. Nor should they attack any importance to the Yingdraw incident. Your propagandists have doubtless presented that in many false ways. But the truth is quite simple, and came about through a simple misunderstanding."

"I was there at the time," Marshall Trigask said, "and can tell you exactly what happened. My command, the People's First, Eighth, Fifteenth and Twenty-fifth Armies, were holding field exercises at Yingdraw near the border of the Chinese People's Republic. During these exercises we were murderously attacked by a revisionist band of turncoat Chinese who had been subverted by Western gold, and who had somehow eluded Peiping authorities."

"I was political commissar at the time," Oruthi said, "and I can attest to the truth of what the Marshall is saying. These bandits came at us under the guise of the Chinese People's Fourth, Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Thirty-second Armies. Naturally we informed Peiping, and then took steps to drive the turncoats over the border."

"They, of course, insisted that they were driving *us* back over the border," Marshall Trigask said, with an ironic smile. "This was what we expected rebels to say, so battle was joined. In the meantime, we had received a message from Peiping. Unfortunately it was written in Chinese. We were unable to read it, and sent it to Moscow for translation. In the meantime battle raged, and for a week both sides blazed away at each other."

"The translation came back," Oruthi said. "It read, 'The government of the Chinese People's Republic resents any implication of expansionism on its part, especially in regard to the rich, empty lands adjacent to the crowded Chinese borders. There are no rebels within the territorial limits of the Chinese People's Republic, and none are possible in a truly socialist state. Therefore desist your warlike attacks upon our peaceful frontiers."

"You can imagine our perplexity," Marshall Trigask said . . . "The Chinese insisted that there were no rebels, and we were fighting at least a million of them, all of whom had stolen uniforms from the Chinese People's Army."

"Luckily," Oruthi said, "a high Kremlin official had come to ad-

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vise us. This was an expert on China. He told us we could ignore the first part of the message about expansionism, since this was meant in the form of a salutation. The second part, about the nonexistence of rebels, was obviously designed to save face. Accordingly, he advised us to push the rebels back into China."

"That, however, was quite difficult," Marshall Trigask said. "The rebels had been reinforced by several million armed men, and by sheer weight of numbers had pushed us back all the way to Omsk, on their way sacking Semipalatinsk."

"Seeing that the situation showed signs of seriousness," Oruthi said, "we called in reserves. These came to no less than twenty Russian armies. With these we gloriously slaughtered an uncountable number of rebels, and pushed the rest back completely across Sinkiang into Szechwan."

"We thought that took care of the matter," Marshall Trigask said. "We were marching to Peiping to exchange views with the Chinese People's Government when the rebels suddenly renewed the attack. Their force now numbered some fifty million men. Luckily, not all of these were armed."

"Even the gold of the West has its limits," Oruthi said.

"We also received another note from Peiping," Marshall Trigask said. In translation, this one told us to leave the territory of China immediately, and to cease our warlike assaults against the defensive elements of the Chinese People's Army."

"We *think* that's what the note meant," Oruthi said. "But with fiendish cleverness, they had constructed their message so that, when read upside down, it became a poem which went: 'How beautiful is the mountain/ floating in the river/ past my garden.' "

"Most ironic," Marshall Trigask said, "was the fact that, by the time we deciphered their message, we had been pushed back many thousands of miles from the borders of China, all the way across high Asia to Stalingrad. There we made a stand, slaughtered millions, and were thrown back again to Kharkov, where we made a stand, and were once thrown back to Kiev. Again we were forced back, making another stand outside of Warsaw. By this time we considered the situation to be serious. We gathered together volunteer armies from Eastern Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Roumania, Hungary, and Bulgaria. The Albanians treacherously joined the Greeks, who with the Yugoslavs, attacked us from the rear. We threw off this attack and concentrated our forces for the main effort to the east.

We rolled the rebel forces back

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the entire way they had come, and farther, all the way to Canton, which we devastated."

"There," Oruthi continued, "the rebels threw in their last few million reserves, and we fell back to the border. After regrouping, we fought a series of border engagements for several months. At last, by mutual consent, we both withdrew. That ended the Yingdraw incident."

"We have been unable to contact Peiping since that time," Oruthi said. "But the pique of our great ally will pass."

"Remember to tell your President," Trigask said, "that our automatic defences and our missile arm is fully prepared, even though our conventional infantry forces may be somewhat reduced. We are ready to rain down destruction whenever necessary. But now, Mr. Joenes, we really must offer you some refreshment."

Joenes was fed great quantities of yoghurt and black bread, which was all that was available at the moment. Then they went with Joenes in his own jet to show him the fortifications.

Soon Joenes could look down and see row upon row of cannon, mine fields, barbed wire, machine guns and pill boxes, extending endlessly to the horizon, disguised as farms, villages, towns, troikas, droshkys, and the like. Joenes saw no people however, and this reminded him of what he had heard earlier about the state of affairs in Western Europe.

They returned to Moscow Airport and the Russians disembarked, wishing Joenes good fortune on his return to Washington.

Just before he left, Comrade Slavski said to him, "Remember, my friend, that all men are brothers. Oh, you may laugh at such fine sentiments coming from a drunkard who cannot even be counted on to do his work properly. Nor would I blame you for laughing, no more than I blamed my chief, Rosskolenko, for clubbing me over the ear yesterday and saying that I would lose my job if I showed up again drunk. I do not blame Rosskolenko, I love that terrible man as a brother, even though I know that I will get drunk again, and that he will fire me. And what will happen then to my wife, gentlemen, who weeps day and night and lies under the sofa praying? What will happen to my eldest daughter, Grustikaya, who patiently mends my shirts and does not curse me when I steal her savings for drink? I can see that you despise me, and I do not blame you. No man could be more despicable than I. You may abuse me, gentlemen, and yet I am an educated man, I have noble sentiments, a great future once lay before me. . . ."

At this point Joenes's jet took

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off, and Joenes was unable to hear the end of Slavski's speech, if that speech had an end.

It was only later that Joenes reviewed all he had seen and heard, and realized that there was no need for a war, nor even an excuse for fighting under present circumstances. The forces of chaos had overwhelmed the Soviets and Chinese, just as it had the West Europeans. But there was no reason now for that to happen in America.

This message, with full details, Joenes sent ahead of him to Washington.

13. THE STORY OF THE WAR

(As told by Teleu of Huahine.)

It is sad to relate, that, as Joenes flew over California, an automatic radar station identified his jet as an invader, and fired a number of air-to-air missiles at it. This tragic incident marked the opening phase of the great war.

Mistakes of this kind have occurred throughout the history of warfare. But in 21st century America, due to the great confidence and affection which men had for their machines, and due also to the semi-autonomous nature of those machines, such a mistake was bound to have dire consequences.

Joenes watched with horror and fascination as the missiles sped toward his jet. Then he felt a violent lurch as the jet's automatic pilot, sensing the danger, fired its own anti-missile-missiles in defence.

This action brought other ground-based missile stations to the attack. Some of these stations were automatic and others were not, but all responded instantly to the emergency call. Joene's jet, in the meantime, had expanded its entire armament.

But it had not lost the guile which its planners had built into it. It switched its radio to the missile-dispatching frequency and broadcast an alarm, declaring itself under attack and naming the airborne missiles as enemy targets to be destroyed.

The tactics met with some success. A number of the older, more simple-minded missiles would not destroy a craft which they considered their own. The newer, more sophisticated missiles, however, had been alerted to just such an attempt on the part of an enemy. Therefore they pressed the attack, while the older missiles fiercely defended the solitary jet.

When the battle between the missiles was fully engaged, Joenes's jet glided away from the area. With the battle zone far behind, the jet streaked for its home airport in Washington, D.C.

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Upon arrival, Joenes was taken by elevator to the Services Command Post, which was several hundred feet underground. Here he was questioned as to the nature of the assault upon him and the identity of the assailants. But all Joenes could say for certain was that he had been attacked by some missiles and defended by others.

This and all other data concerning the battle was given to the War Probabilities Calculator, which quickly presented the following choices in order of apparent probability:

1. The Communist Bloc had attacked California.

2. The neutralist countries had attacked California.

3. The members of the Western Alliance had attacked California.

4. Invaders from outer space had attacked California.

5. There was no attack upon California.

The calculator also gave all possible combinations and permutations of these five possibilities, and ranked them as alternate subpossibilities.

The attending officers found themselves bewildered by the many probabilities, subprobabilities, possibilities and subpossibilities which they were given. They had hoped to choose the statement rated most probable, and to act upon it. But the War Probabilities Calculator rendered that impossible. As new data came in, the calculator revised and refined its probabilities, ranking and grouping them in ever-changing orders. Reappraisal sheets marked "MOST URGENT" spewed from the machine at the rate of ten a second, no two alike, to the annoyance of the attending officers.

This was most confusing; so it is no wonder that the officers took the calculator's first five major possibilities, rated them equally, and brought them to General Voig, the Commander of the Armed Forces, for him to render final decision.

Voig, studying the five alternatives before him, was aware of the problems of modern warfare, and sadly recognized how dependent he was for information upon which to base a sound decision. He also knew that most of his information came to him from extremely expensive machines which sometimes could not tell the difference between a goose and a rocket; machines which required regiments of highly trained men to minister to them, repair them, improve them, and to soothe them in every way. And even with all this lavish attention, Voig knew that the machines could not really be trusted. The creations were no better than the creators, and indeed resembled them in many of the worst ways. Like men, the machines were frequently subject to

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something resembling emotional instability. Some became over-zealous, others had recurring hallucinations, functional and psychosomatic breakdowns, or even complete catatonic withdrawals. And aside from their own problems, the machines tended to be influenced by the emotional states of their human operators. In fact, the more suggestible machines were nothing more than an extension of their operator's personality.

General Voig knew, of course, that no machine possessed a real consciousness, and therefore no machine really suffered from the diseases of consciousness. But they *seemed* to, and that was just as bad as the real thing.

But in spite of the problems, General Voig was a man who had been trained to make decisions. And now, after a last look at the five alternatives, and a rapid questioning of his own knowledge and opinions, Voig picked up a telephone and issued his orders.

We do not know which of the five alternatives the General chose, or what his orders were. It made no difference. The battle had moved entirely out of the General's hands, and he was powerless to force the attack or to order it stopped, or to have any important effect upon the hostilities. The fight had become uncontrollable, and this condition had been hastened because of the nature of the machines.

A wounded California missle screamed high into the heavens and crashed at Cape Canaveral in Florida, destroying half the base. The remaining half rallied and launched retaliatory missiles at an enemy apparently entrenched in California. Other missiles, damaged but not destroyed, crashed in all parts of the country. Local commanders in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and more other states, struck back on their own authority, as did the automatic missile stations. Both men and machines had no lack of intelligence reports upon which to base this decision. In fact, before their communications were disrupted, they had received a deluge of reports covering every possibility. Being soldiers, they chose the most dire.

Throughout California and all of Western America, this retaliation was retaliated against. Local commanders believed that the enemy, whoever he was, had established beachheads on America's east coast. They sought to destroy these beachheads, not hesitating to use atomic warheads when they deemed it necessary.

All of this took place with a terrible rapidity. The local commanders and their machines, subjected to a hellish rain of fire, tended to fight back as long as they could. Some may have waited for more specific orders; but in the

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end, all fought who could fight, compounding destruction and confusion, and spreading it to all corners of the world. And soon, the civilization of proliferating machinery had vanished from the face of the earth.

While this was taking place, Joenes stood bewildered in the Services Command Post, watching generals give orders and other generals countermand them. All of this Joenes saw, and still could not say of his own knowledge who or what the enemy was.

At this point the Command Post gave a vast shudder. Although situated many hundreds of feet underground, it had now come under attack by special burrowing machines.

Joenes flung out a hand to keep his balance, and grasped the shoulder of a young first lieutenant. The lieutenant turned, and Joenes recognized him at once.

"Lum!" he cried.

"Hey, Joensey!" Lum said in reply.

"How did you get here?" Joenes asked. "And what are you doing in the army as a lieutenant?"

"Well, man," Lum said, "that is quite a tale, and it is all the more strange because I am not exactly what one would have called the military sort. But I am very glad you asked me that question."

The Command Post shuddered once again, throwing many officers to the floor. But Lum contrived to keep his balance, and he told Joenes the story of how he had joined the Army.

14. HOW LUM JOINED THE ARMY

(Lum's own words, as recorded in the Book of Fiji, Orthodox edition.)

Well, man, I left the Hollis Home for the Criminally Insane shortly after you, and I went to New York and attended a really swinging party. It so happened I got high on C that night, which is nasty stuff if you aren't used to it, which I was not. I mean I've always been a peyote man, and heroin never interested me, and I thought that cocaine was merely one of those old-fashioned kicks until I tried it that night.

But I did try it, and I got this feeling whilst with the big C that I had a Florence Nightingale type duty to tend all the sick fighting machines of the world. The more I thought about it the surer I was, and the sadder I became as I thought of poor suffering old machine guns with burnt-out barrels, tanks with rust in their treads, jets with broken landing gears, and the like. I thought of the terrible dumb agony these machines go through, and I knew that I had to heal and comfort them.

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As you can see I was pretty well gassed, and in that state I marched down to the nearest recruiting station and joined up so as to be close to the poor machines.

The next day I woke up and found myself in the Army, and it was a sobering not to say a frightening thought. I rushed out to find that damned enlistment sergeant who had taken advantage of a poor hophead obviously not in his right mind at the time, but he had flown to a Chicago whorehouse to give an enlistment speech. So I hastened to see my commanding officer, also called the CO, and told him that among other things I was a dope addict and a recent inmate of an institution for the criminally insane, both of which I could prove. And that furthermore I had latent homosexual tendencies, an overpowering fear of firearms, one blind eye, and also a bad back. Because of all this, I said, I could not legally be accepted into the Armed Services because of the provisions on page 123 paragraph C of the Enlistment Act.

The CO looked me straight in the eye and smiled in that way only a Regular Army man or a cop can smile. He said, "Soldier, this is the first day of your new life, so I am going to overlook certain irregularities in your manner of addressing me. Now kindly get the hell out of here and report to the sergeant for duty."

When I didn't go, he stopped smiling and said, "Look, soldier, nobody cares about your reasons for enlisting, or for your so-called dope jag at the time. As for the various debilities you mentioned, don't worry about them. Hopheads have done a firstclass job in Planning, and nobody can laugh at the exploits of the Homosexual Brigade during the last police action in Patagonia. All you have to do is be a good soldier and you'll find that the army is a good way of life. And do not go around quoting the Enlistment Act like a guardhouse lawyer, because that will make you unpopular with my sergeants, who just might beat your head to a pulp. Right? Right. Now we know where we stand, and I bear you no hard feelings. In fact I congratulate you on the patriotic zeal which led you to sign up for the special fifty-year full-duty enlistment last night. Good man! Now get the hell out of here."

So I left his office and wondered what to do next, since you can get out of a jail or an asylum, but not out of the Army. I was pretty down for a while, but then suddenly I was given a commission as a second lieutenant, and directly after that I was assigned to the personal staff of General Voig, who is the very tipmost of the top brass.

At first I thought all this had happened because of my pleasing personality, but then I found out

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it was something else entirely. It appears that when enlisting, sky-high on coke, I had put down my occupation as pimp. This came to the attention of officers who watch for special occupational groups. In my case it was reported to General Voig, who immediately put in an order for me and my services.

At first I had no idea what to do, since I had never worked in that field. But another general's pimp, or Special Duty Officer, as he is more politely called, gave me the word. I thenceforth arranged a party for General Voig every Thursday night, this being the only night he could spare from his military duties. It is easy work, since all I need do is put in a call to one of the numbers listed in the Washington Defense Area Recreation Book; or, in a pinch, I send a hurry message to the Armed Services Procurement Department, which has branches in all major cities. The General has shown a hearty approval of my efficient work, and I must confess that the army is not the grim and terrible place I had imagined it to be.

And that, Joenes, is what brings me here. Speaking as General Voig's aid and good friend, I can tell you that this war, whoever in hell we're fighting, could not be in better hands. I think this is important for all men to know, since lies are frequently told about men in high positions.

Furthermore, Joenesy, I think I should point out that there has just been an explosion here in the Command Post, and this hints of greater things to come. Also a few lights have gone off, and the air is growing just a shade musty. Therefore, since our services are obviously not needed down here, I suggest that you and I split this scene and cut out entirely, if such indeed is still possible.

Are you with me, Joensey? Are you all right, man?

15. THE ESCAPE FROM AMERICA

(As told by Paaui of Fiji.)

Joenes had been stunned by a small explosion occurring near his head. In a state of shock, he let his friend lead him to an elevator which plunged them still deeper into the bowels of the earth. When they opened the elevator door, they were standing in a wide passageway. Ahead of them was a sign, reading: EMERGENCY UNDERGROUND SURVIVAL ROADWAY. FOR AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY.

Lum said; "I don't know if we are authorized personnel, but technicalities must be forgotten at a time like this. Joenes, are you able to speak? Straight ahead should be a vehicle which will carry us to what I sure as hell hope is safety. The General told me about this setup, and I trust the

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old buzzard wasn't merely having his bit of fun."

They found the vehicle where Lum had expected it to be, and drove underground for many hours until they emerged on the eastern shore of Maryland, facing the Atlantic Ocean.

Here Lum's vigorous will faltered, and he was unable to think what to do next. But Joenes had recovered full possession of his senses. Taking Lum by the arm, he went down to the silent beach. Then he turned south and walked for several hours, coming at last to a deserted little harbor.

Joenes selected one sailing boat from the many which lay at the docks, and began transferring food, water, charts and nautical instruments to it, taking them from the many other seagoing boats in the harbor. The job was not half done when missiles began screaming overhead, and Joenes decided to cast off immediately.

The boat was several miles out to sea before Lum roused himself, looked around, and asked, "Uh, man, like where we bound?"

"To my home," Joenes said. "To the island of Manituatua in the South Pacific."

Lum considered that, and said mildly, "Sort of a long trip, isn't it? I mean, what with rounding Cape Horn and all that jazz, it's probably something like eight or nine thousand miles, huh?"

"Something like that."

"You wouldn't maybe consider going to Europe instead, which is only like three thousand miles?"

"I'm going home," Joenes said firmly.

"Yeah. Well," Lum said, "east or west, home's the best. But we're somewhat short of food and water for a trip like this, and I suspect that little may be available along the way. Nor do I have the most perfect confidence in this boat, which I believe is already beginning to leak."

"All quite true," Joenes said. "But I think the leaks can be fixed. As for food and water, we'll hope for the best. Lum, there's really no other place that I know of worth going to."

"OK," Lum said. "I wasn't knocking it, I just thought I'd kick around a few thoughts to see if they would roll away. Since they won't, I like you will simply hope for the best. Also I think you should write your memoirs during this jaunt, since they would make interesting reading, and would also serve to identify our poor starved cadavers should someone happen to come across this boat."

"I am not at all convinced that we are going to die," Joenes said, "though I must admit it seems a strong possibility. But why don't you write yours, Lum?"

"I may write a sketch or two," Lum said. "But for the most part I am going to think about men and governments and how to improve

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them, bringing to the task every resource of my hophead mind."

"I think that's admirable, Lum," Joenes said. "Together we have many things to tell people, if only we can find some people."

Thus, in perfect accord, Joenes and his loyal friend set sail upon a darkening sea, down a perilous coast, toward a distant and uncertain goal.

16. THE END OF THE JOURNEY

(Written by the Editor, and compiled from all available sources.)

Of their voyage down the coasts of the two Americas, around Cape Horn, and then northwest to the islands of the South Pacific, very little need be said. The trials which Joenes and Lum underwent were severe, and the dangers they faced were many, Joenes himself never spoke to any great extent about the terrible trip, since he was interested in other things. And the only words which Lum is reported to have said, when asked about the voyage, were, "Well, man, you know."

We do indeed know. So we pass on to Joenes and Lum at their journey's end, starved but still living, unconscious and cast up on the shore, and nursed back to health by the inhabitants of Manituatua.

When he recovered his senses, Joenes inquired about his sweetheart, Tondelayo, whom he had left in the islands. But that high-spirited girl had grown tired of waiting, had married a fisherman from the Tuamotos, and was now the mother of two children. Joenes accepted this with good grace, and turned his attention to world affairs.

He found that only a few effects of the war had been noted on Manituatua and its neighboring islands. These islands, long out of touch with Asia and Europe, had suddenly lost communication with America. Wild rumors poured in. Some said there had been a great war in which all the great countries of the earth had destroyed each other. Others put the blame on alien invaders of an unbelievable malevolent disposition. Some said there had been no war at all, but a plague instead, followed by a general collapse of Western civilization.

These and many other theories were argued, and are argued still. Your editor holds to the view expressed by Joenes, of a spontaneous and chaotic explosion of warfare, culminating in the destruction of America, the last of the great civilizations of the Old World.

Both Joenes and Lum were conscious but feeble during those days. The war was months past before they had regained their entire

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strength. But at last, each of them was ready to play his part in the shaping of the new civilization.

Sadly, they saw their duties in different ways, and were able to reach no substantial agreement. They tried to keep their friendship intact, but this became increasingly difficult. Their followers compounded the difficulties, and some thought that these two haters of war might start a war themselves.

But this was not to be. Joenes's influence in the South Pacific islands, from Nukhiva in the west to Tonga in the east, was predominant. Therefore Lum and his followers provisioned a number of canoes and sailed eastward, past Tonga to the Fijis, where Lum's ideas had excited considerable interest. They were both in middle age at this time, and they took leave of each other with genuine sorrow.

Lum's final words to Joenes were: "Well, man, I guess every cat has to find his own scene where he can swing. But frankly it bugs me going off this way, you know? You and I been through it, Joensey, and we're the only ones who *know*. So even though I think you're wrong, keep punching in there, keed, and get the word across. I'm going to miss you, man, take it easy."

Joenes expressed similar sentiments. Lum sailed to the Fijis, where his ideas found the greatest possible reception. Even today, Fiji is the center of Lumism, and the Fijians do not speak the dialect of English derived from Joenes, but rather the dialect of English which Lum spoke. Some experts consider this to be the purest and most ancient form of the English language.

The most striking part of Lum's philosophy can be told in his own words, as written in the Book of Fiji:

"Look, the whole thing happened in the way it happened on account of machines.

"Machines are therefore bad. They are also made of metal.

"So metal is even worse. I mean it's evil.

"So as soon as we get rid of all the damned metal, everything will swing."

This was only a part of Lum's teachings, of course. He also had firm theories on the need for intoxication and ecstatic joy ("You gotta swing"); about ideal behavior ("Nobody oughta bug anybody"); about the limitations which societies should observe ("They shouldn't get on anybody's back"); about the need for good manners, toleration, and respect ("you shouldn't put nobody down"); about the importance of objectively determined sense-data ("I dig real things the most"); about cooperation within a societal framework ("It's pretty good when all the cats swing together"); and many other things,

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covering nearly every aspect of human life. The examples were taken from the Book of Fiji, where all of Lum's sayings can be found complete with their annotations.

In those early days of the New World, the Fijians were most interested in Lum's theory about the evil inherent in metal. Being a naturally adventurous and far-travelling people, they set sail in great fleets, led by Lum, to throw metal into the sea wherever they could find it.

On their expeditions, the Fijians gathered new advocates for the fiery Lumist faith. They spread the destruction of metal throughout the Pacific, journeying past Australia to the jungle-clad coasts of Asia, and then eastwward to the shores of the Americas. Their exploits are recorded in numerous songs and stories, particularly of the work they did in the Phillippines, and, with the aid of the Maoris, in New Zealand. Only late in the century, long after Lum's death, were they able to complete their work in Hawaii, thus ridding the Pacific Islands of an estimated nine-tenths of their metal.

At the height of Fijian prestige, these fierce men briefly conquered many of the islands they touched at. But they were far too lacking in numbers to make their conquests endure. For a while, Fijians ruled in Bora Bora, Raiatea, Huahine, and Oahu; but the local populations either absorbed them or drove them out. Also, most Fijians respected Lum's explicit instructions concerning islands other than the Fijis: "Do your bit and then split the scene; above all, do not hang around and be a party-poop."

Thus ended the Fijian adventure.

Joenes, unlike Lum, left behind no organized body of philosophical writings. He never explicitly disapproved of metal, but was himself indifferent to it. He distrusted all laws, even the best, while at the same time recognizing the necessity for them. For Joenes, a law took its goodness from the nature of the men administrating it. When the nature of those men changed, as Joenes believed was inevitable, then the nature of the law changed, too. When this happened, new laws and new lawgivers had to be found.

Joenes taught that men should strive actively toward virtue, and at the same time recognize the extreme difficulties involved in that striving. The greatest of these difficulties, as Joenes saw it, was that all things, even men and their virtues, were continually changing, thereby forcing a lover of the good to abandon his illusions of permanence and to search out the changes occuring in himself and others, and to center his goodness in a never-ending search for momentary stability in the midst of life's metamorphoses. On a quest like

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this, Joenes pointed out that one needed luck, which was indefinable but absolute essential.

Joenes spoke of this and many other things, always stressing the excellence of virtue, the necessity for an active will, and the impossibility of perfection. Some say that in his old age Joenes preached in an entirely different way, and told men that the world was nothing more than a horrid toy built by evil gods; the form this toy took was of a theater, in which the gods put on endless plays for their own amusement, creating and using humans for the cast. And what the gods did was to stuff these men full of consciousness, and imbue this consciousness with virtues and ideals, hopes and dreams, and all manner of qualities and contradictions. Then, with the actors so constituted, the gods set problems for them, and found vast enjoyment in the spectacle of these strutting puppets, filled with their own importance, convinced of their place in the scheme of things, suspecting or proving their immortality, laboring to resolve the dilemmas which the gods had put before them. The gods roared with laughter at this spectacle, and nothing delighted them more than to see some little puppet determined to live with decency and to die with dignity. The gods always applauded this, and laughed at the absurdity of death, which was the one thing that rendered all of man's solutions impossible. But even this was not the most terrible thing. In time, the gods would tire of their theater and their little human puppets, would put them all away, tear down the theater, and turn to different amusements. After that, in a little while, not even the gods would remember that there had been man.

This tale is not characteristic of Joenes, and your editor does not think it worthy of him. We will always remember Joenes in the strength and pride of his middle years, when he preached a message of hope.

Joenes lived long enough to see the death of the old world and the birth of a new one. Today all civilization worthy of the name exists upon the islands of the Pacific. Our racial stock is mixed, and many of our ancestors came from Europe, America or Asia. But for the most part we are Polynesian, Melanesian and Micronesian. Your editor, who dwells upon the island of Havaiki, believes that our present peace and prosperity is a direct consequence of the smallness of our islands, their great number, and the large distances between them. This renders impossible any hope of total conquest by one group, and allows easy escape for any man who does not like his own island. These were advantages which the people of the continents did not possess.

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We have our difficulties, of course. Warfare still breaks out among the island groups, though on an infinitesimal scale in comparison to the wars of the past. There is still social inequality, and injustice, crime and disease; but these evils are never so great as to overwhelm the island societies. Life changes, and this change often seems to bring evil as well as progress; but the changes take place more slowly today than in the hectic past.

Perhaps this slowness of change is due in part to the great scarcity of metal. It was always in short supply in our islands, and the Fijians destroyed most of what was available. A little metal is sometimes dug out of the earth in the Phillippines, but hardly any of it gets into circulation. Lumist societies are still active, and steal any metal they can find and throw it into the sea. Many of us feel that this irrational hatred of metal is a deplorable thing; but we still cannot answer Lum's ancient question, with which the Lumists still taunt us.

The question goes: "Man, you ever try to build a atom bomb out of coral and coconut shells?"

As for the end of the Journey, the following is told. Lum met his death at the age of sixty-nine. Leading a party of metal-destroyers, Lum's head was stove in by the club of a huge Hawaiian who was trying to protect a sewing machine. Lum's final words were: "Well, boys, I'm on my way to that Big Tea Party in the Sky, run by the Greatest Junkie of them all."

So saying he died. This was Lum's final recorded statement on religious matters.

With Joenes, the end came in an entirely different way. In his seventy-third year, while visiting the high island of Moorea, Joenes saw a disturbance on the beach and went down to see what was the matter. He found that a man of his own race had drifted ashore on a raft, his clothes in shreds and his limbs badly sunburned, but otherwise in good condition.

"Joenes!" the man cried. "I knew you were alive, and I was sure I'd find you. You are Joenes, aren't you?"

"I am," Joenes said. "But I'm afraid I don't recognize you."

"I'm Watts," the man said. "as in watts the matter? I'm the jewel thief you met in New York. Do you remember me now?"

"Yes, I do," Joenes said. "But why have you sought me out?"

"Joenes, we talked for only a few moments, but you had a profound influence on me. Just as your Journey became your life, so *you* became my life. I cannot explain how this knowledge came to me, but it did come, and I found it irresistible. My work was you, and concerned only you. It was a long hard task for me to gather together everything you needed, but I did

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not mind. I received help, and marks of favor in high places, and was content. Then came the war, rendering everything more difficult. I had to wander for many years over the ravaged face of America to find what you would require, but I completed my work and came at last to California. From there I set sail for the islands of the Pacific, and for many years I went from place to place, often hearing of you, never finding you. But I never grew discouraged. I always remembered the difficulties *you* had to face, and took heart from them. I knew that your work had to do with the completion of a world; but my work had to do with the completion of *you*."

"This is very amazing," Joenes said in a calm voice. "I think perhaps you are not in complete possession of your senses, my dear Watts, but that makes no difference at all. I am sorry to have caused you so much trouble; but I had no idea you were looking for me."

"You could not know," Watts said. "Not even you, Joenes, could know who or what was looking for you until it found you."

'Well," Joenes said, "you have found me now. Did you say that you had something for me?"

"Several things," Watts said. "I have faithfully preserved and cherished them, since they are necessary for your completion."

Watts then took out an oilskin package which had been tied to his body. Smiling with pleasure, he handed the package to Joenes.

Joenes opened the package and found the following things:

1. A note from Sean Feinstein, who said that he had taken it upon himself to send the things, and also to provide Watts as an agent. He hoped that Joenes was well. As for himself, he had escaped the holocaust with his daughter Deirdre, and had gone to Sangar Island two thousand miles off the coast of Chile. There he was enjoying a modest success as a trader, while Deirdre had married an industrious and open-minded local boy. He sincerely hoped that these enclosures would be of value to Joenes.

2. A brief note from the doctor whom Joenes had met in the Hollis Home for the Criminally Insane. The doctor wrote that he remembered Joenes's interest in the patient who had believed himself to be god, and who had vanished before Joenes could meet him. However, since Joenes had been curious about the case, the doctor was enclosing the only bit of writing which the madman had left—the list which had been found on his table.

3. A map of the Octagon marked with the official Cartographer's seal and approved by the highest officials. Marked "accurate and final" by the chief of the Octagon himself. Guaranteed to take

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anyone to any part of the building, swiftly and without delay.

Joenes looked for a long time at these things, and his face became like weathered granite. For a long time he did not move, and then did so only when Watts tried to read the various papers over his shoulder.

"It's only fair!" Watts cried. "I carried them all this way, and I never looked at them. I must have one peek at that map, my dear Joenes, and just a glance at the madman's list."

"No," Joenes said. "These things weren't sent to you."

Watts became furiously angry, and the villagers had to restrain him from seizing the papers by force. Several of the village priests came expectantly up to Joenes, but he backed away from them. There was a look of horror on his face, and some people thought he would throw the papers into the sea. But he did not. He clutched them tightly to him and hurried up the steep trail into the mountains. The priests followed, but soon lost their way in the dense undergrowth.

They came down and told the people that Joenes would soon return, and that he had merely wished to study the papers alone for a while. The people waited and did not lose faith for many years, although Watts died. But Joenes never descended from the mountains.

Nearly two centuries later, a hunter climbed the high slopes of Moorea in search of wild goats. When he came down, he declared that he had seen a very old man sitting in front of a cave, looking at some papers. The old man had beckoned to him, and the hunter came forward, not without fear. He saw that the papers which the old man held were faded by sun and rain to an indecipherable blur, and the old man himself seemed to have gone blind from reading them.

The hunter asked, "How can you read those papers?"

The old man answered, "I don't have to. I've learned them by heart."

Then the old man rose to his feet and went into the cave, and in a moment everything was as though he had never been.

Was this story true? In spite of his incredible age, could Joenes still be living in the mountains and thinking about the highest secrets of a vanished age? If so, did the madman's list and the Octagon map have any meaning for our own age?

We will never know. Three expeditions to the place have turned up no evidence of human habitation, although the cave is there. Scholars believe that the hunter must have been drunk. They reason that Joenes went out of his mind with grief at receiving important information too late; that

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he fled from the priests and dwelt like a hermit with his fading and useless papers; and finally died in some inaccessible place.

This explanation seems only reasonable; but the people of Moorea have built a small shrine on the site.

A somewhat expanded version of this novel will be published later this year by Signet under the title JOURNEY BEYOND TOMMORROW.

***Through Time And Space With Ferdinand Feghoot:* LVI**

Ferdinand Feghoot was the first man to follow Burton's Time Track back into the other-real world of the Arabian Nights Entertainments and sail with Sindbad the Sailor.

Sindbad, just promoted Grand Admiral, would take no advice. Though Feghoot argued for more practical projects, like a search after rocs' egs, he insisted that a vessel propelled by genii in bottles could circumnavigate the Rim of the World without falling off, and he succeeded in convincing the Sultan.

Hardly had they cleared the Bab el Mandeb when a storm overtook them, the greatest that ever was seen. The ship sprung a leak. The genii flew off *en masse*. And Sindbad and Feghoot alone survived to reach an unknown island inhabited only by lean wild asses.

"I have heard that wild asses can be baked into savory pies," said Sindbad dejectedly.

On this diet they lived eighteen months. When they finally were rescued, Feghoot—the greatest of gourmets—preferred charges at once, so successfully that the Sultan passed sentence without further ado, demoting Sindbad to Seaman Third-Class.

"Protector of the Poor!" screamed Sindbad. "I am being punished only for wishing to serve you—for my soaring ambition!"

"On the contrary," murmured Ferdinand Feghoot. "You are being punished for *my* wild ass pie rations."

—by GRENDEL BRIARTON (*with thanks to G. O. Gunthorp, Jr.*)

See page 42 for free Feghoot book.

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EDITORIAL

Our readers, may Heaven bless them and keep them (keep them our readers, that is), continue to give us their invaluable advice, without which we would scarcely be able to bring out a single issue. From Manhattan: *I agree with The Flea. Since you took over the stories in F&SF have been meritless . . . far too much fantasy, not enough science fiction.* From Wilkes Barre (Pa.): *I raise my voice and cry out for at least an even weighting of fantasy against science fiction, if not a downright preponderance of fantasy.* Gentleman from Visalia (Calif.) says he is *perfectly aware that your editorial weighting has always been in favor of what in my opinion is that misbegotten, amorphous, meaningless and lifeless type of fictional diarrhea, "Fantasy"* . . . A young person writes from Baltimore that his *favorite is neither science fiction nor fantasy, but science fantasy.* And a lady from Montreal implores us to *please, make Mr. Truman Capote's next story an original, not a reprint!*

Really, much as we might like to, we cannot *make* Mr. Truman Capote do anything. What we can do, we can continue to try to put together each number of this gazette with the delicate precision of a custom-made watch (or maybe an astrolabe), balancing not only Science Fiction and Fantasy (and Science Fantasy), but such other ponderables as Long and Short, Heavy and Light, Original and Reprint, and all the subtle graduations in between and beyond.

We are grateful to our authors, a gratifying number of whom loyally continue to give us first choice over other publications, some of which pay more money. We appreciate such keen-eyed attentions exemplified by a reader who not only called to our attention a Russian story printed in a Swedish Esperanto magazine, but translated it for us, unsolicited, into English! We are glad that most of you enjoy reading The Magazine, because we surely enjoy editing it.

— Avram Davidson

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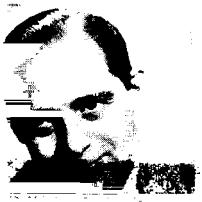

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